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NOTES AND COMMENTS ON SCRIPTURE.

VOL. VII.

THE CARLTON PRESS, CHESHAM, BUCKS.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ON

SCRIPTURE

FROM THE NOTE BOOKS OF

J. N. DARBY.

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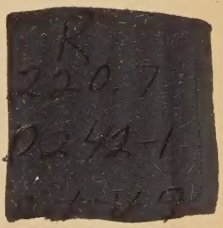
Τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα Κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

I Peter i. 25.



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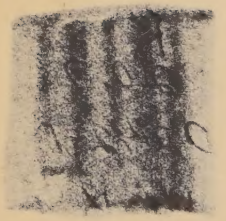

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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

Chapter I.

It is not the offices of the Lord that the Gospel of John so much unfolds, but His Sonship of the Father, and of man associated with that which He really was. The Word was with God, and was God. All the historical matter is ministration of the exhibition of this great, leading, central truth, the hinge of heaven and earth as its centre in truth and dispensation. For I must add here, also, that the association of our Lord with the Jews as the dispensed form and purposed revelation of this character is also, in its place, brought in here, with all the development of truth of which prophecy gives the formal accomplishment or display.

This chapter accordingly presents us, as a sort of introduction, so to speak, with the Person of Jesus, in its existence, incarnation, and all the various relationships in which it stood to God and man, centring in its revelation to us (the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, declaring Him), adding the form and character of the dispensation.

Is there not something in the frame of John's spirit, and his communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, which peculiarly fitted him to tarry, as

said the Lord Christ, till He came? And may we not learn what peculiarly holds its ground against the subtlety of disorganizing heresy and antinomianism (which separate from the love and communion of God) from the exhibition we have of the mind that was in him?

—1-3. There would seem to be more meaning in *pros ton Theon* ("with God") than merely *apud* (*nigh*), expressed by *para Theo.* I know of no case of *pros ton* being used merely in this sense. The most analogous passage is "that eternal life, which was with the Father," but there is *ending in* included in this word *pros*, and communicative association. It stood there in the presence of, and associated (vitally) with God. Also "in the beginning" means in existence prior to time; we find Him in essential, eternal existence. Everything else had a beginning, a cause commencing it, but He "was in the beginning." Therefore it is said, "The devil sinneth *from*," not *in*, "the beginning." The comment on *Theos* (God) here is idle, and proves only the ignorance of the commentators. Every affirmation of nature or quality concerning an object is without the article, and the object or subject matter affirmed of with it. Had it been *ho Theos*, it would have made *ho Logos* (the Word) exclusively God, and denied the Deity of the Father and the Spirit.

We have here, also, the most solemn statement, as of the eternal existence, so of the personality of the Word. He was the Mediator of creation as well as redemption. God could do nothing towards the creature but by mediation. And there was another reason, and that

was, that the whole scheme was to manifest the Son, and in and through Him the other two Persons; and therefore all things were created by Him and for Him (to the end of verse 3).

—4, 5. Then we have the full development of Him concerning whom these things were, and who was revealed in them. Then what He was amongst men (for "as in Adam, so in Christ"; for this Sonship was above the dispensation of Judaism, and so this Gospel presents Him). He was "in the beginning" (*en arkee*). And now in man was death and knowledge entered into the world by sin; but knowledge without the power of truth is darkness and confusion. But the Lord was the power of knowledge in all those things as to which knowledge had come in. "In Him was life," not merely here as manifested, but to be manifested, as compare 1 John i. 2. Light was the perfect rectitude of Divine conversation in which this life, being of power, formed and exhibited itself through all that was scattered in darkness and confusion in the knowledge of that which had not the power. Therefore, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death." The life, that which was in the Son Himself, therefore was the light of men. He was, therefore, antecedent to all dispensation, morally as well as actually the light of men, such as they were. But there was another point, their intelligence of this light; hence another truth: "The light appears in darkness," for in light, so to speak, there is no appearance of light, "and the dark-

ness" (now the fact) "comprehended it not." Hence the whole need of dispensation, and the ground of specialty of grace; I do not say *the cause*.

—6. There was a man who had a mission from God whose name was John. He came not *to be* but "*for* a witness concerning the light, that all might believe." Hence John's mission, though of dispensation in its exercise, in one sense was universal in its character, or rather subject. Repentance is light in darkness, or darkness seeing the light. But still, in its exercise, it was confined, but "That was the true light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man." Such was the character of Christ's (the Word's) manifestation. So, therefore, it was "in the world."

We come now to the personal facts, for the moral is here brought into fact, as drawn from fact before, "In the beginning." The divisions of subjects are: verses 1-5, original truths; 5-14, display of them abstractly considered in dispensations; 14, the truths resumed in the actuality of dispensation. Though I think the Persons are implied, yet the expression is, I think, characteristic: *hôs monogenous para patros* (as of an only begotten with a father). We might translate it in English, conveying these two things: "as firstborn with his father."

—7. Note also an omitted circumstance, that no testimony was competent, that is, because of man's darkness, to lead or influence the human soul, for there was not only light but testimony concerning the light, see chap. v. 32, and following verses.

—10. Most wonderful sentence! Yet the simple

history of the whole matter, and when we consider the statement of His character which went before, what do we learn of the world! But all was divided between these two: "He was in the world" (let the world remember it, the world which "was made by Him," for we have it here not in abstract but in fact), and "the world knew Him not." It was pitch darkness, and the light of God gained no entrance, found no single chord of response which could know that it was light; but farther dispensations had been arranged by which, as entering in by the door in a way appointed of God, owned of them, every tie of personal interest should be awakened and fulfilled. "He came unto His own," for our Lord was the Son of David and King born of the Jews, and "His own received Him not," adding rebellion and folly. The light that was in them was darkness, and how great therefore was it! "But as many": it is general, but applies specifically to the Jews. Here we find the characteristic fruit of the mission in grace from His office. "As many as received Him, to them gave He right to be children of God." It was the position and title in which He placed them. Thus called from the darkness, He gave them authority to be and walk in this character, what none ever had before, for even Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, but now He "as Son over His house" (but the time of that is simply the millennial day).

—12, 13. This word *tekna Theou* (children of God) is John's delight, and is of vast importance. See 1 John iii. 1, and following verses; compare also Romans viii. 14, 16, 17. "Children" (*tekna*) is, I take it, the

family name towards God; sons (*huioi*) the prescriptive character in which we stand to the world. This speaks, then, of the familiar blessedness of their relation towards God, not their dignity merely toward man; and in truth they were born, they did really derive their life from God; it was by no act towards Him. "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." So Peter. There is much contained in this assertion. Here, then, we have the whole result of the manifestation of the Word simply considered in its efficiency as of God, as before of its independent existence, and the result of its outward manifestation.

—14. Here we come to the whole method and order of this glorious blessing and truth. Having spoken of those as made sons of God, he now speaks of the great root and source of sonship, Christ come in the flesh; for here we have it not as of light merely, and therefore damnatory of darkness, but what it was, and now in fulness of communicated grace to those who received Him, who were made partakers of the same sonship, "sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord."

This was from the will of God; before, what He was in Himself, and as representing God in character; now what He was in grace, replenishing human nature with His fulness as Son of God, and making others partakers in the same: "The Word became flesh." As the other was the essential character, so this is the revelation of the *mesne*; yet also the way of glory, for "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also." Christ is the consummation of glory, but it is the Father's glory, while

it is His therefore as "an only begotten with a father," ("with" used as we saw it before). Here He is not known; His manifestation, His dwelling among us, was the question; but this is *what* the glory *was*. Further, I note this is as manifested, that is, as man, for He was manifested in the flesh. Nor do I see that in this character He is spoken of as Son save as known in the flesh. He is spoken of previously as the Word, etc.; now as Son. Now, though He have this title by inheritance, which none else have, yet is the manifestation of Him as Son of God in and as man, that man by adoption into unity with Him might know they were sons, and thus their adoption into sonship, and reception of the fulness secured. *

—15. In that which was now necessary, then, to be declared, lest by humiliation that which was to be declared might be concealed, we have the great harbinger of the light at once brought forward to testify, "This is He of whom I said," etc.

—16, 17 For indeed it is out of His fulness we have all received (these the words of the second John commenting on the force of the statement of the former, connected

* I read this over, fearing lest there might in human expressions be any colour for that approach to Sabellianism which is not uncommon in connection with the term *Son*, which I believe to destroy the basis of all truth, but if taken simply it is free from this danger (I hate the heresy, and would guard against the fibre of its roots), and I think takes the truth out of the hands of the heretics. Still the manifestation of Him is as "an only begotten with a father"; and what is still stronger as to the fact, "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father." The confusion is in not seeing He is Son in creation as well as in redemption, and the order of both, and that He redeemed as Son what He created as Son.

with his own to which that bore testimony) and that not vaguely, or as grace commonly understood, but by being the fulness available in man, and exhibiting itself according to the purpose of God in all the circumstances in which the Son of God was to be placed, we adopted (and as Firstborn, and Only Begotten, having it in Himself, for "all fulness was pleased to dwell in Him") into unity with Him. "Grace upon grace," grace corresponding to every grace in Him, for it is His grace in a man, and ours in Him by union into it; for the Law was given as a transferable thing to those who received, or to whom it was made known by Moses. But grace and truth were by Jesus Christ, or the Anointed.

—18. In connection with this, and in superiority over the Law, which was indeed the perfect testimony of His will in testimony in law, there is another thing: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son," the subject now in treatment, "who is in the bosom of the Father," that is His place, "He hath declared Him." The Word, then, was made flesh; that is the declaration of the fact by the Spirit. Then we have the aspect of faith concerning this, and the testimony of John (that is, the Spirit as residing in him) concerning it as the height of the Jewish dispensation, for indeed in principle he was the restorer of all things. We have then faith so apprehending and declaring Him, capacity to understand what the experience of the Apostle, in the power and testimony of the Holy Ghost, declares of His fulness, for here was the grand difference of the dispensation. But further, this was the declaration. What? That of which we have received portion—blessed be God!—of

God, even the Father. "Lord," said one, "shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." This, then, in all its fulness, thus fully spoken of, He is, as become flesh, and so revealed to faith, the only begotten Son; therefore so the Apostle speaks in Ephesians iii. 16-19, etc.

—19. We have now the testimony of John, and that associated in matter with what we have before had of the Lord, but therein the discovery of the place he held towards Christ and Israel; for in giving honour to Jesus he manifested his own place. Christ was to come among the Jews, and here testified to as the Lord amongst them. He answers their expectations: Christ, the Prophet, that is, like to Moses or Elias. If a person has a direct office from God, it may be as much a matter of faithfulness to affirm what he is (and a test of truth too, for he commits himself to God's making good his assertion) as to disavow what he is not. He acts, not for or from himself, but from God, in obedience.

We have here the first assertion made good in the circumstances. "He was not that light, but came to bear witness of the light," and, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not"; and the incipient development of "His own received Him not." This addressed to the Jews; testimony to them of John's ministry among them, and of the Lord in that.

—27. The order of manifestation is not always the order of glory; so we may say of the first and second Adam (compare verse 15).

—28. Was not all this not only after our Lord's baptism, but also on His return from the wilderness after His temptation? It would appear so, as I see at

present plainly from comparison of the accounts in the Gospels. But this was as apprehended and felt by John so apprised by the Spirit of who He was, or the outgoings of the Spirit in him. So we see it in the Psalms. It is a recognition of Him as such, not properly a testimony. Verse 32 is the testimony on which this is founded, but it is still the prophetic Spirit.

—29. Here is John's prophetic testimony to Him generally, identifying the Person all through these testimonies as the One who "was before me." His specific office he states in verse 31. Personally, he did not know Him. He was pointed out prophetically to him, and by him; and so he spake; but there was no difference in this in John from the rest. We see the difference of the prophetic Spirit and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and how the least also in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he, though "of those born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John Baptist." Observe here also the prophetic testimony reaches out to His generic character: "Who taketh away the sin of the world."

—32. We have another definite testimony to a distinct point—the Sonship of Jesus; and this by the testimony given of all adopted sons; also the Spirit of God sent down upon them: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"; and, "Because ye *are* sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts." So because He was the beloved Son (we also loved as He) the Spirit was sent upon Him, token to John that He was so. Here we see the importance of

seeing His *Sonship* in the flesh. If we look at it simply in His Divinity all this is lost, and our interest and union in it, though it be also by our being made partakers of the Divine nature that we have indeed this portion and union which He had by virtue of being such. Dispensatorily I believe also the Sonship was associated with the Jewish people, for "Israel is my first-born," and, "I have called my Son out of Egypt"; but as "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" we know that Gentiles are brought in to be fellow-heirs by the Gospel, and receive the promise of the Spirit by faith. In this we have the two great characteristic testimonies as to the Lord Jesus Christ. First (though "He was before me," the same Person here testified of), "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," subject and passive as come in the flesh on account of sin, His work in the flesh; as in Person the Displayer of the Father's glory. This is Jesus. Secondly, as actively, and constituted, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, manifested the Son of God, not only by the testimony of the Father, declared to us also as revealed to Him (for Christ must declare it *as* known to Himself), but also to John, the enquirer into the meaning of the Spirit of Christ in him, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, so we, as partakers with Him.

From verse 19 to 34 therefore we have the testimony of the prophetic messenger to the Jews on requisition officially, and the open testimony to those that had ears to hear, upon seeing Him coming, as drawn out by that which He was in Himself (blessed be His name!) as come in the flesh. Happy he who could say,

though even but prophetically, yet faithfully: "I have seen, and bear witness, that this is the Son of God"! This his joy was fulfilled. May we not say, though most unworthy and infinitely less faithful, Happier yet they who have His words: "That your joy may be full"? The same Spirit in measure that He had, branches of the vine, knowing Him reconciling the world, yet what return of faithfulness and love?

—35. Here again we have the apprehension of John, that is, the Spirit drawn out by seeing Jesus. It is not so properly a testimony publicly as the pouring forth the mind of the Spirit as acted upon by the manifestation of Jesus, which all, from the Father downwards, unite, taught of God in one common fulness (and to us unspeakableness of delight), to recognize and delight in The Spirit must, so to speak, relieve itself of its testimony. It is too its office.

—36. "And looking upon Jesus as He walked." He was looking on Him walking about, and says, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Oh! the thoughts of the Spirit concerning Jesus thus manifested! "Behold the Lamb of God!" And this it is acts on the mind of others; not the mere necessary testimony by which the world may be condemned, but the outgoings of apprehensions by which the saints are affected, and the fire kindled. And this is its subject; this is the way they are affected. It is not merely (fruitful afterwards), "This is He that baptizeth," "and I saw, and bare record," but, "Behold the Lamb of God!" And here the world derides Him, shewing its pride and enmity against love. The chance word of feeling may have

more efficacy than the necessary testimony of truth. No doubt the presence of the disciples called it out, for when we value we love to bear witness to our value. Oh! that there were this thought of Jesus ever!

—37-40. "The disciples heard Him speaking" (blessed words!) and they followed Him, and said, "Rabbi." They sought to abide with Him, at least to know where He abode. But He tells not only, but says, "Come and see." The whole circumstances of the scene are full of interest. Here is the testimony which the ministry of repentance must always bear: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Repentance dwells ever in the wilderness, but in the leadings of God Jesus is manifested to it, and it owns Jesus the Lamb of God, and the abode of the disciple of repentance is with Him. Yet there is an actual simplicity in the whole which is very remarkable, for these were the first disciples that were led to Jesus. This "What seek ye?" marks no haughtiness, as it were, of purpose in our Lord's first presenting Himself, though conscious willingness to receive to Himself, for the Spirit now dwelt in Him fully as manifested to office; and we have noticed a manifested development of progress in relationship towards the existing body, His opposition to whom was drawn out by their manifested enmity against the grace and truth of which He was the real depositary.

This progress is peculiarly exhibited in this Gospel of John. Its simple and unassuming opening is here stated, though its full manifestation in the uprising of the authority of His mind is exhibited in all the Gospels, as detailed in facts conversant about the closing of the

Lord's ministry with and amongst them; and their deliberate enmity accordingly is marked, and so shewn in this Gospel, progressively, and the results apparently strange; for, after all, whatever was due, and so owned of God and Himself too, the place of His willing acquiescence, though fully felt trial and strangeness, was in fact to yield then to the evil opposed, it was (but into this, save that it was for His glorious triumph, and the letting in of rich blessings, we cannot enter) "their"—oh! a strange word!—"hour, and power of darkness." But, I say, the humbleness of purpose, the unsectarian spirit (though I dread the abuse that may be made of this word) in which our holy, patient, Servant-Lord undertook the work, or fell, as it were, into it, His acts were as of necessity imposed. I speak of this as manifested for our example. Oh, that we may be kept always in some measure, at the least, in the meekness of the same spirit! Oh! teach Thy servant, Lord, always to be the least, and the last, serving Thee only in boldness, and valuing the secret of Thy love in the everlasting sight of the Father's love above all, all the nothingness valuable only as Thy service. Keep Thy servant to this! for it is a promise and blessing: "His servants shall serve Him" (John xii. 26) which study; while we turn now to the passage on which we are reading and noting. I look upon it, then, as of main interests, as being the transfer from John Baptist's ministry to the Lord's, and the manner further of the Lord's first entrance upon His, after which, I think, thus is confirmed His return from the temptation, from which, we may call to mind, He came in the fulness of

the Spirit. Observe how this here shews itself, and how restrained, in how apparently restrained a manner (which note). Let us guard against want of energy, but know the Spirit is a Spirit of wisdom, and sometimes shews itself in quietness, not always in manifested energetic power upon man, that is, as exhibited to the mind of man; but withal, "What I have spoken in secret," etc. It does not apply to the duty of testimony or service without, but service within, discipleship, where Christ is known in His body. In this the Spirit of Christ must lead us. It is known as the Son of God, He is felt and understood to be the Lamb.

—41. The development of the natural flow of circumstances and the Divine knowledge is very interesting. But we must remark that they were as fully of God, and in the power of God, as the full manifestation of Jesus; that is, they were as fully from and of it. So faith recognizes, and God recognizes the faith.

—43. This was His first journey into Galilee, His going into Galilee after the temptation; the first public call the Lord made.

—47. There is no guile in a prejudice or doubt imposed by apparently or supposedly right institutions or instructions. There *may be* hatred of the thing to be revealed, but not even in the sight of God a doubt as to testimony about His Son Himself unrevealed. The channel of testimony may be the subject of prejudice arising in the weakness of man from a healthful state of mind, for the devil can deceive this and abuse it.

—48. Here we see how the circumstances were through the sight of God, and how His mind, unseen,

went through the circumstances. We saw the circumstances before, and the knowledge shewn of the Person divinely afterwards; then the direct acting of the Lord without circumstance, and that leading to association of circumstances, and now in and through these circumstances, apparently independent, the same thread of God's mind acting as when these were never sent at all, but the action direct. So it is; and this is a very blessed revelation.

—49. Though of universal power, yet in dispensation I still find this expression connected with the Jews, and all this intercourse as yet, though revealing the Christ, the Lamb of God, is Jewish in its substance and adaptation. I am not aware, save in Daniel iii. 25, of the term being used in the Old Testament.

—51. "From henceforth." Now that the Son of Man is upon earth, the object of Divine favour and love, the ground of intercourse between heaven and earth (though special) is restored, set on foot. It is exceedingly interesting to dwell on the occasion of the ministry of Angels. It at once arises from exaltation, inheritance, and depression. They are the servants (to God) towards the Heir in His humiliation. Similarly we see in Jacob, and here in the true Jacob, rightly called *Jacob*, and loved of old. But this is a glorious truth, this renewal of intercourse, and the place in which Jesus now stood in Person. In this we have the place of sons. It is impossible to open this out at large here.

I cannot help thinking that there is a reason for putting "ascending" first; though I am not sure as ministers and messengers of God in the earth. They

ascend in respect, as it were, of the things to be reported of His providential care, and the object on which they are made to descend, as the object of this care is the Son of Man.—NOTE, it is as Son of Man that He is the object of this care, thus pointed out.

There is more in this that will lead to interesting subjects of Divine revelation and enquiry, if we compare the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Lord, and this of the ascent and descent of the Angels of God upon the Son of Man. It has a positive force in this sentence, and also a most important associated force; for though true of the Son of Man, it is true of Him as so designated. He was not now declared to be "the Son of God with power." There is sufficient in this to lead to the clues of thought, but oh! where shall we find the expression of that full, that wondrous fulness drawn out by the Son of God come in flesh, and the relationship into which all things are brought by it? But we must close here.

There is this very important principle in the Gospel of John not, I think, noticed; and that is, that it takes up the existence of the Word as God, and draws dispensation (and union of glory for the Church) from this; giving, though coming after, preferred before, for it was before even the creation, and the source, therefore, even of its blessing. "In the beginning God created." Of that creation Judaism was the highest dispensed form, if good could have been in the creature. And they had

therefore the Sabbaths given to them as sign of Covenant. But the creation was spoiled by sin, by man; nor could man enter in any way thus into the rest of God. But here it is brought that even when and therefore antecedent to creation itself, "In the beginning was the Word," was One existing who was God, the source and power and substance of dispensation, not depending on, though bringing in, creation; but, hanging on union with the Creator, the dispensation of this by the incarnation (amongst the Jews, yet paramount to it all) is what John's Gospel brings forth and develops. This gives it its amazing importance. Hence our hope is in resurrection, our rest in union by it, paramount to creation and creation-rest. Union is the secret of it all.

Note, in the first chapter of John there is also this important division: there is, first, the manifestation of God in the Word; light, life, fulness, and the glory of the Only Begotten of a Father. The Son has revealed Him whom none had seen. He is not immediately called the Christ, though named so by John the *Evangelist*. John the Baptist says *he* is not, but refers them to the glory of Christ's Person as before him. This is transitional. Secondly, there is what Christ as Man is before God in efficacy for man: Lamb of God, baptizer with the Holy Ghost, and Son of God; that is, as anointed Man here, though much more than that also, the anointing is the evidence and power (compare Rom. i.). Lastly, is the reception or discovery of Him by those

who become His disciples. *They* receive Him as the *Christ* who fulfils Moses and the Prophets. But they would see more than this, the Angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. This relates, not only to His reception then, but to His twofold character as relates to the earth: Heir of promises, as Son of David among the Jews, and of God's counsels as regards man; Son of Man as entitled according to these counsels.

There are some details to note in John i. The great general principles are (as heretofore noted) down to the end of 13; but then some details: Christ's Person, 1-5; only that when stated to be light, and the light of men as life, it met darkness, which did not comprehend it. This is still nature and principle, but necessarily historical. 6-9 is then historical, but (9) the light formally comes into the world (not promises or Jews or ways), but, though nature and principles, historical. Then we get the darkness, the state of the world and Jews; and it passes from abstract principle (light), to personal activity; light come into the world, as viii., ix., and elsewhere, afterwards; but it was He who created it, and it did not know Him (*autos auton*). He came to what was His own (the Jews), and they did not receive Him. Here we have the state of all men, the world, and the Jews. Then we get some receiving Him; but these were a called-out set, they born of God. It was a new thing, or state; of God in grace. We get the truth in all its principles; as to the nature of things,

Divine or darkness, old and new. The work and gift come in then historically.

In John i., from 14, we have first the Word made flesh; Himself come, and dwelling amongst us, "full of grace and truth"; and His glory seen as Man, as "an Only Begotten with a Father"; "and of His fulness have all we received"; grace and truth come by Him. Then we have God, whom none has seen at any time, declared by "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father." His work, in its full and present effect, comes after (29-34); but then marked out also as Son of God down here, by the anointing and sealing of the Holy Ghost.

—33. Baptizing with the Holy Ghost is never, that I am aware, used of an individual; nor is Christ baptized. He is anointed of God, and sealed of God the Father. Now the body of disciples were baptized in Pentecost, and all by one Spirit baptized into one body. It was power embracing in one all. But the individual is anointed and sealed of God, as established by Him in Christ; sealed for the day of redemption; marked out surely by God; has the anointing of the Holy One.

Note, here, that the general reception of the Holy Ghost by the converts in Samaria is *before* the manifestation of the wickedness of Simon's heart. Here the above remark becomes important.

Note, first, the abstract nature and intrinsic glory of Christ as the Word; next, His communicative fulness in connection with saints, and revealing character. Then testimony of John to what He comes as to Israel, the Lord; and then what He is for Christians, or in a Christian point of view (I do not say the Church, for it is personally); Lamb of God in view of the world; baptizer with the Holy Ghost; and Son of God *sealed on earth.*

Then begins the process of calling, by John, by Christ, which closes with the Residue of Israel owning Him Son of God, King of Israel. All this on earth, and in Israel. Christ in Person was the sole and adequate object of all the care of God. This recognition by Israel brings in the wedding, and the Jews' purifying turned into the wine of joy, and judgment of purification for God's house. Hence the third day of ii. would date clearly from i. 35 and 43. Remark, too, the setting aside of Judaism, i. 13, and the ministration meanwhile till judgment and assurance of ultimate blessing, from 35 to the end. But it is as *Son of Man* as well as Messiah.

There is another point to remark. First, all is general, dependent on His Person to the end of 18 (compare 7 and 31); from 19, dispensational acting in respect of Israel, as accomplishing the prophecies, is entered upon, though the personal glory from eternity is maintained. Hence 29-34 gives the character of evangelical power (29, 33, 34), while the present service whereby the accomplishment of these ways commenced is given 31. But 29-34 is a next day, having the mixed character of the result and the present service. 19-23 are purely in respect of Israel.

—35, 36, begin again, or go on, rather, with this. He who was the Lord, preceded by John Baptist as His herald, becomes Lamb of God, a suffering One (Messiah) in Israel. It is not here "Who taketh away the sin of the world," for I judge that "Lamb of God" is a title of suffering Messiah in Israel, (therefore exalted also.) Hence the believers in John's testimony go to Him as Messiah (41). Then, I doubt not, 35-42 give the Residue, specially at Christ's coming, 43-51 those attached to Christ in the power of His second. Christ has a Nazarean character, but can enlighten whatever be the prejudices of the upright; and here He has the characters of Son of God, King of Israel, Son of Man; given as a whole because of Christ's Person; are in connection with Israel. It is to be remembered that it is *henceforth*, 51.

I remark in John's Gospel, ch. i., all the glory of Christ's Person set forth in a remarkable manner, from His Divinity WHO IS to His millennial glory among the Jews as Son of Man; and this very methodically. First, the chapter (as we have often noticed) begins before the beginning of Genesis; that is, not with creation, but with the existence of Jesus always. In the beginning He was. Then what He is abstractedly in Himself is given: the Word, the expression of Divine wisdom and Divine power. By the Word of the Lord the heavens were of old. He upholds all things by the Word of His power. Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God. He was with God, and He was God. In Him was *life* also; "and the

life was the *light* of men." John is introduced here as generally bearing witness to Christ as the Light. We have then what Christ is; not abstractedly, but as incarnate: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"; His glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Thus He becomes the communicative source of grace to men, in relation as Son with the Father.

Then we have specially what the Lord is as regards the Church, or as effecting His *work*: the Lamb of God. He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost Himself a Man baptized with it, * and thus witnessed to be the Son of God. Hereon He becomes a witness and a gatherer. Then He is presented to us as Messiah, Son of God and King of Israel; and the Angels ascending and descending upon Him as Son of Man; thus closing with His millennial glory.

It seems to me that the following chapter shews the Church's part rather in that glory, or the principles of it, at least. The third day evidently gives some meaning. It was not the third day of the preceding, for He had passed into Galilee. Three days were elapsed withal in the former chapter: John's testimony, the Church, and the Millennium. For Christ, however, it was the third day; but I see then, on the full display, in a three-fold way, of the personal glory of Christ (or four-fold, rather): abstract, personal, ecclesiastical and millennial (if I may so call them).

* But see second note on page 20. (Ed.)

Note, there is this additional circumstance in the first of John's Gospel: not only is Nathanael presented as the Remnant in the latter day, but as rejecting Jesus as come from Nazareth in Galilee; that is, under the prejudices of Israel as having so rejected Him, but *then* received into blessing as the Remnant.

Chapter II.

A thing done rightly of God, if done with the associations of this life, is done wrongfully. Men would call this perverse; but it would defeat the mind of God. It was as important to dissociate that as to do the miracle. The miracle would have lost all its proper place, had this not been done; nay (as we know now), the minister of evil. We have the value of this conduct now in all things. I have never to mind the judgment of man.

I have not fully estimated the value and importance of this miracle. I have sometimes thought that it was typical of the latter day blessings, when He should drink wine new with them in the Kingdom of His Father; but I know not as yet. Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, is the direct bringing into association Himself and His mother, her association with the world, and His now with His disciples, and consequently His dissociation simply with her. Thus He was manifested. Yet it was no personal failing or

hatred, but, so to speak, official, as we see at the close of the circumstance. It was important as shewing that all His relationship, as ministering in the world, was with the Father. The disciples were given Him of the Father; they were His brother and sister and mother. Here was the first primary manifestation. Having received disciples of the Father, He threw off, in this ministry, all other relationship. Being come to do His will, and nothing else, Him only He owned.

The passage appears to shew that the bridegroom, etc., were some family connection or acquaintance of the mother, or nominal natural parentage of the Lord. "The mother of Jesus was there." Jesus therefore and His disciples (the association not being wholly broken) were invited to it (the marriage of the parties). This was the occasion of His manifesting forth *His glory*, of His breaking the association, and shewing it in connection with that in which He had come to do His Father's will; that He had those which were new, and His own. But observe the perfectness of our blessed Lord. It was not by avoiding the circumstances, but by the perfectness of the association of His own heart with the Father's will that He thus walked separate; for not only here, but His mother and His brethren went down with Him to Capernaum. I have no doubt that in this, that is, the leading principles of the marriage feast, there is a typical development of His relationship with the Jewish Remnant, as Isaiah viii. and xlix.

—13. Then He comes to act in the exercise of this conscious place, and while in consciousness, yet in no way in assumption of His own glory, but zeal for His

Father's honour, forgetful of men, and leading them rather indeed to call Him to account for it; for the power was not yet revealed.

—14. At the Passover, these things were bought for the feast.

—15. This is a remarkable transaction. The point of it is distinctly noticed: the consciousness of Sonship (in Him as a Man) making Him zealous for His Father's honour. The point of this book is here distinctly shewn out. The world would blame this also, but when there is energy of the Spirit, zeal (which might seem beside itself) when the matter is undeniable for God's honour, is not rejected. It was right to be done; whether it was right to do it in another sense is another question. Here it is left on its right ground: "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up." It was witness, too, of that day when, as Son indeed with power, He shall purge the temple of all that defiles it; that blessed day when all shall be cleared away that hinders the Father's glory, and the free access of His love. Now was His time, indeed, to suffer, but still the great result to which this all leads, the purpose of God, known and set in His heart, was breaking forth even out of its time; for it was strange to Him also to suffer, but the great results were not strange. But God gave Him (most glorious Jesus!) the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to them that were weary. He wakened His ear morning by morning, He wakened His ear to hear as the learned. But I pass beyond my subject.

—16. Observe too here the association of Sonship

with Judaism, and the cleansing of His Father's house (the Temple). "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"; and this explains also what follows in that place; although also, it is true, the glory, and we in it, is set above the heavens, and so they (that is, the Jews) recognize in that Psalm (viii.). But how few will understand this! The answer of our Lord, too, has peculiar appropriateness. It was the act of Sonship in power, and vindicating the intrinsic holiness of His Father's house (compare the last verse or verses of Zechariah). Now, in the resurrection He was declared to be "the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness." Here, then, precisely was vindicated "the sign that justified" (as indeed morally it was ever justifiable, whoever did it) His doing these things.

—17. Compare Psalm lxix., and note verses 12 and 14. Our Lord was evidently now progressing into the full separation of His glory. I have somewhere else a note as to His apparently growing, or more elicited sense of the glory of His place and character. This is deeply interesting; and note, this is the development in John precisely of this, as declared in chap. i. 1-13, etc.; and note accordingly verse 16, and Luke ii. 49.

—18. This was the act of entitled Sonship (yet a zealous duty and honour to His Father, due properly always, for it was always wrong that God should be dishonoured), so to speak, out of its time. Its evidence was where the Lord set it. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit

of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Nevertheless, for those acts which flow from a title not now exhibited, we cannot look that God should give present vindication, which note. Nevertheless this was, properly speaking, a righteous act. The holiness and honour of God's house was carelessly, or wilfully, at any rate obnoxiously, and most guiltily profaned, and He was vindicating it. But His enemies enquire not as to the occasion, the righteousness displayed, or the result, but the title to do it; and for this we must often wait till God's time. Yet let us take heed that it is such as will be established to be righteousness, when we shall be so manifested in that day, that it is done from a secret communion with God, which will justify it when the day cometh; that it is *His* will, and done for His honour simply.

And, observe, the Lord does it, not without being able to appeal at once to that which entitled Him. Their not understanding it was nothing to the purpose. The act was a praiseworthy act. The same energy of the Spirit which led Him forward in the zeal of God's house, gave Him the consciousness of the title in which He was acting, and which *God would justify in that day.*

—22. The acts of Christ are the confirmation of the Scriptures, which are the mind of God exhibited in those acts. The resurrection of Jesus puts the seal upon the whole association, vindicating the application of the words to His Person and His words, as indeed we are there in setting to our seal that God is true.

This is an important and interesting passage for

the connection and development of the Scriptures. The principle, easily deducible in these words, is the key to all Scripture, the resurrection being the great key to both, the link that unites and develops both the preceding testimonies as to their object, and when they find, and under what circumstances, that development; for even the sufferings of Jesus all get their character from this, and all the subsequent glory of the Kingdom based on that which was evinced by His resurrection, and accomplishing all His words, the glory being not yet come. The Scripture itself would have wanted its proof of truth, if Jesus had not come, for it testified of Him; but, He being come, we know what was in the mind of the Spirit in the Scripture, and we believe it, and that not merely in the things actually done by Jesus, for these get their value by His resurrection, but also being that it is by His resurrection all the glory of the Kingdom, not yet fulfilled, and the words which He spake concerning that Kingdom, and all that was to come, is verified by that great seal. All Scripture therefore is prophecy; that is, in its object it is prophetic of Jesus, it expounds Jesus, and is fulfilled by Jesus, the sufferings of Jesus, and the glory that should follow.

This was the first manifestation of Jesus to the Jews in His Sonship to them as a nation. It was not merely the house of Israel, to the poor of which He came witnessing that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand that, indeed, was His great message in love and ministry); but He was sent, in respect of the manifestation of His Person and Messiahship, to the

Jews, the restored tribes from Babylon, who constituted properly the Jewish nation in respect of their existing relationship to God, though still "Lo-ammi" (not My people), yet still put in this specialty and responsibility of place in which Messiah was presented to them as a restored people under special favour. He did many miracles now, and many believed on His name; they were done before the nation as such; for at this time they came up from all parts to the feast.

The Gospel of John shews more what Jesus was down here. I speak of the beginning. He was light, life. It is what He was in the world; Himself, as before the world was. The Epistle presents Him as the manifestation of what God is, and that in the same character, that by Him we may have fellowship with the Father; adding therefore His work. Further, I judge 19-34 of John i. go together, and present the Lord first as such (John being His forerunner), and therefore as coming to Israel in that character; and then what He was savingly as regards any blessed in virtue of His work before God; and as, in fine, taking away the sin of the world: Lamb of God; baptizer with the Spirit; and Son of God. Then 35 to the end (with which chap. ii. is associated) go together, being the gathering of a Remnant in Israel; then by John's introductory testimony, and by going with Christ Himself, and thus in the latter day. This introduces the marriage feast, when the water is changed into the

good wine of joy, and the house of God judicially purged; this to the end of verse 22; from 18 being a discussion of title, which the Lord founds on Divine power in resurrection: Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up.

Chapter III.

This chapter ought clearly to have begun at verse 23 of the last. This is in immediate connection with what goes before. To verse 21 gives us the result of His manifestation at Jerusalem (thus first publicly after His baptism, and public sealing in the world by the Holy Ghost) and the works which He wrought there. After that the Lord went into the country, "the land of Judæa," verse 22. But this interview with Nicodemus was a part of this. The former part presents a general and vague, this a special and contrasted, result. I have been sometimes disposed to think that there was an intended contrast between their general and unreal recognition of Him on account of His miracles, and His intimate knowledge of what they really were, which prevented His trusting Himself to them.

This passage gives occasion to many thoughts, not merely as to the character of Jesus as not seeking dis-

ciples; His direct reference to what they were in the sight of God. (With the Apostles, "As many as received the Word gladly were baptized," Acts ii. 41). The trial which accompanied the Lord by the very heartless readiness of the people to receive Him, on the mere outward testimony, showing the unchanged nature of their own hearts, without reference to the real character and object for which He came, the nature of His Kingdom. This, as rejected, is shewn in the last clauses of the former chapter. His power, His object, the character of His ministry, its reception, the full testimony brought out by mercy acting upon the apprehensions of men, but the discerning power of His reception of them, what was in man, and what was in Jesus, are all drawn out here. But, in the order of the book, the leading point is the general reception of Him by the Jews, upon the external testimony, to please, as it were, themselves, and His reception of them. This is more distinctly brought forward in detail in the case of Nicodemus, and the great principles on which it was founded.

The paramount character of the Kingdom which He was setting up, and the way therefore in which God was meeting them—(flowing indeed necessarily from the very Being and Person and office of the Son of God manifested as Son of Man; for of moral necessity, being so exhibited, its paramountness to the Jewish system, and its superiority of nature and character over which, also its presentation to the Jews, was exhibited, and hence the result of its being so presented to the natural man who, in respect of his own hopes, so now of its

heavenly hopes, would willingly have received it)—is what is drawn out in this very Gospel, and here is developed in its moral characters, as well as the result of the juxtaposition of the Lord and the people, as a preliminary introduction to the whole scene: the presenting Messiah and the Kingdom to the Jews; but that Messiah appearing, as necessarily from God, in the power, spirituality, and glory of the Kingdom of God, and the effect of the uncongeniality of the thoughts and expectations of the Lord and the people from the *nature* of them. The fact was given before; the interview with Nicodemus develops the principles of it, which therefore follows.

Nicodemus was a genuine enquirer, therefore his name is given to point him out afterwards, but he came in association with the thoughts and expectations of the Jews, as above rehearsed. "Rabbi, we know that . . . no one can do the miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him." We learn also, though here exhibited as in the mind of a really sincere enquirer, what were the common feelings of the Jews, rulers even, and Pharisees, at that time; for he acted on them. So often God leads, though these thoughts operated, in his case, in a sincere mind, and led him to enquire for himself, for his conscience, which is always timid, always acting individually and for itself, and therefore afraid of others, though the same occasions, doubts, and enquiries may be, and here doubtless were, externally influencing them. They were willing that Jesus should be the Servant of their thoughts, meeting them; but to enquire in personal, self-subjecting interest was not

with them at all. They would consult therefore together, so as to know the result of believing before they believed; therefore the Lord says, "He that is willing to do the will of God shall know," etc. Here is the awful responsibility of these people. Conscience is the real guide to knowledge.

—1. In this state of things, while at Jerusalem, there was a man, a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews, came to Him by night, and said, "We know that Thou art a teacher"; we must recognize you as such from these miracles. But he states it in the way which exhibits the genuineness of the conviction of his own mind, while he states the general impression: "No man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him." Still this was only outside, there was no Kingdom of a new and spiritual character affecting the whole nation Nay, I am not sure that Nicodemus does not, in form, come short here of the general impression, because he states that to which his own conviction had genuinely (and therefore that only) arrived. "Many believed on His Name"; this was going apparently further than Nicodemus, but it was the loose impression of evidence, nothing affecting their souls. In one we see enough to set him in action, though fearfully, for one step in practice is all beyond any advance in theory. But, says Jesus, "the Kingdom of God"; I am come with a definite object. He swerves nothing ever below it. Jesus never went below His point. A man "must be born again."

But He met, observe, at once, the genuineness of Nicodemus's mind with a simple, full statement of the

subject, subdued its views, and what remained of his associations, with "We know," meeting the bud of personal conscience which was at work under it, and Nicodemus at once turns to enquire concerning the matter. All the "Master" and the "We know" is gone, under the power and substance of Jesus's instruction, and his mind is astray, and its genuineness comes out, though in ignorance. I am not sure but that there is a mixture of personal emphasis with unbelief in "How can a man being old be born again?"

But to turn to the substance of the interview. The Lord then, we have seen, was speaking of the Kingdom. It was this that He at once brought before Nicodemus, and this He does, and the Spirit before us, in its full proportions and parts, the earthly and the heavenly, with that which forms the basis and the entrance into each. But the first thing which the Lord does is to meet the views of Nicodemus as to the whole matter. He erred in his apprehensions; the eye must be first opened. "The Kingdom of God." "Except a man be born anew" (this is the very outset of seeing anything) "he cannot see the Kingdom of God." It is a new ground of perception by which we can see this Kingdom of God at all. Thus the Lord arrests entirely the whole train of Nicodemus's enquiry. The very understanding and perception must be "anew." This it was most important first to get clear apprehensions upon. The fact was here simply stated: "born anew." Some would say *above*; but this is senseless, for it mars the whole sense, and makes Nicodemus's following enquiry ridiculous. But Nicodemus's mind in nothing

went beyond the natural man and his experience, nor could not. He could have no conception beyond this. Our Lord therefore says as to the principles and method of the Kingdom which He then at once introduces, "Except a man be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

I think this part of the statement relates to the nature of the work, and not the instrument of its operation. This is important to the apprehension of its force. It is the answer to the manner spoken of in the enquiry of Nicodemus. The observations on the word *ek* (of) thus used bear directly on this "Water" I believe to be significative of the cleansing character of this generation ("anew"), as the Spirit is the character and power of life, in which the energies are put forth, of life in active and natural assimilation to the character of God. "The way of life is above to the wise, to depart from hell beneath." It is true the ordinary symbol of this is baptism, but the substance of the thing is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "Who came by water, not by water only, but by water and blood." As Paul speaks: "Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and your bodies washed with pure water." But it includes confessing also, for that is part, and the formal part, of this good conscience. So Jesus proved Himself true, witnessing "a good confession." He had "a baptism to be baptized with."

But baptism is the symbol with us of this, as the Lord's Supper is of that which is spoken of in John.

But this, as it need scarcely be proved to a spiritual person, speaks of the thing itself. But it is important to separate it from the Spirit, because this is not merely a purification of the thoughts and habits of the outer man through the intervention of the death and resurrection of Jesus, purifying their hearts by faith, but a giving of life which has its energies through Jesus in every association with the things of God and God Himself. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Howsoever, this accordingly is the first great leading principle of the Kingdom. This is essential to a place of enjoyment in it in all its forms, essential to personal association in it, vital possession of its blessings; the water is formally necessary. I speak even as above interpreted; this vitally; this lives according to that form. Also in the following words we have the instrumental power or original connected with the nature: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," of the thing flesh and the thing Spirit is necessarily flesh and spirit itself. It is the Kingdom of God. God is a Spirit. We must be spiritual to worship Him, and that which is born of the Spirit alone is spiritual, for that which is born of the flesh cannot be but flesh. Thy thoughts go not beyond the flesh from which they spring. This is true as to the portion in the "earthly things" peculiar to the Jew, to the ordinary form in which the Kingdom of God could be presented, to that which even Nicodemus could be thinking of now.

It was *God's* Kingdom, and this will be necessary for the real enjoyment of the "earthly things" in the mil-

lennial glory. But then indeed it will be, as here also brought forward (and from which Jesus drew His knowledge), associated with the "heavenly things," and its blessings flow down, as it were, on the "earthly things." They were, however, in their nature, considerable apart, without Christ's death intervening, which was necessary to anything of the "heavenly things" being the door to it, and the association of the "earthly things" to it, and in *order* necessary to these "earthly things" also; for it was of the resurrection, as now no more to return, etc., it was said, "I will give you the sure mercies of David." But we learn also this further blessed truth: how the millennial glory is the very purpose in which the full mind of God as revealed in Christ is revealed, as indeed is stated in Ephesians i. But here we have the Lord as the revealer, not the accomplisher, of it.

I should apply "we know" to the nature of the necessary enjoyment, "we have seen" to the glory to be revealed. We find it, therefore, the expression of the mind of God as in Christ experimentally perfect, and perfectly answerable to Himself in its nature, of and which He could say, as the witness of it in that day towards God, "We know," and of the glory which is to be accomplished in Him as donatively, and "We have seen"; His indeed in a peculiar sense before, as the Son, but now (that is, in the glory) in the office of it as Man, and so now revealing it. This is a rich and blessed testimony, very full to dwell upon. I mean the revelation in Jesus, in Person and gift, of the character and order of the Millennium as from God and towards God;

for it is so, and fully in Him in both respects, answering and reflecting one another; He being the great connecting link of association, and that which He said now He could say then, save that it will be actually fulfilled as High Priest among the Jews. He will speak that of which all indeed are made partakers, the spiritual knowledge of God; and, as the King of glory, He will, in all its effulgence, witness forth the glory of the Father which no eye but His has seen; but He will come in it as King of kings and Lord of lords, "which in his times He shall shew, who is," etc. But at this time in gracious yet full (by the Spirit) revelation, if not shewing the glory, speaking the words of God, His best glory.

Let us follow, however, the order of the passage itself. I observe in the first place applies it to the subject of Nicodemus's enquiry. His relationship to the Jews we know, as our Lord treats immediately of the Kingdom of God, which was for them: "Do not wonder that I said to thee, It is needful that ye should be born anew." He had stated its nature before, now its application (for even for their portion in this, that they should have a place in the Kingdom, they must be born again), and I apprehend the force of the sentence is in "ye." Do not wonder that I said concerning you Jews, that *you* must be born anew. For this is a prerogative operation of God. Being so, you will observe, in nature it lets in the Gentiles; for if it be "anew," new from the outset, it bears its own nature and character, and to this extent, that is, spiritual consequences of the life of

the Spirit, there is no difference, Jerusalem or not, and producing its title by its result, suited to the nature of the Kingdom, entitles the person on whom the result is produced to a share in the Kingdom, looked at abstractly, whose nature shews the suitableness of the membership, for the Jew can shew no other; this being, as here stated, the distinctive title of admission.

—5. Besides direct evidence it is evident, from our Lord's expecting Nicodemus to know it, that "water" could not mean baptism.

—7. "Do not wonder." Man is duller about spiritual things than natural, and admits power in God in these which he will not in those. This is mere pride and ignorance. "Thou fool," says Paul; therefore the Lord has made them analogous. The extent of the force of this conversation as introducing the Kingdom is manifest, and its accordance with the great character of this Gospel noticed heretofore; also the paramountness of Jesus's character here associated with the Kingdom, shewing speciality of application or address, yet bearing, therefore, in its principles the seed which should spring up in abundant Gentile fruit, embraced by the universality of His character, and part of His spiritual harvest; and, as it blows where it lists, seeing its fruits and operations, but cannot determine whence it comes, so as to have it in known or determinable operation; nor where it goes, for it is of the will of God; you Jews must submit to its operations as the necessary admission into the Kingdom: "So is *every one* that is born of the Spirit." It brings

the power of the Kingdom's character, and the operation must be on you for admission. The admission is prerogative opening, as we have said, in principle and in title, also from its nature, the door to the Gentiles, not as such, but as "born of the Spirit." So the Apostle, or rather the Spirit, argues as to faith; being of faith, the form of this through grace in man's heart, he that believes is the person who finds part, therefore "all that believe," therefore to the Gentiles, for he is (this being supposed) *believing*. Observe the ground: Is He not, whatever the dispensation, the God of the Gentiles? seeing it is one God, etc. So one Lord, (as here) and one Spirit, one Kingdom, and one baptism, one God and Father, etc. So therefore it is here, "every one that is born."

Nicodemus was able, not to see perhaps the order of this, but that it was wholly beyond the associations which he had formed as a Jew. His mind was at a loss. "How can these things be?" Not merely in their spiritual character but in the breach they made in Jewish feelings, the immense change necessary for even a Jew to be admitted into the Kingdom, and the principles (in a measure), involved in it, though the results of them were not fully measured, doubtless in a way obscure; also how in the previous sentence the previous way in which we observed Nicodemus was received by our Lord is pursued, the personal address as to the substance of the matter, yet as coming in the general feeling of the Jew: "Do not wonder that I said to thee, It is needful that ye," etc. Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know

the very principle on which Israel is let into the Kingdom? And we may add, besides putting Nicodemus upon right thoughts, it expresses the feelings of our Lord as to the state of the people: How shall I deal with them? what will be the result to them if the teacher of Israel does not know the first principles?

But the Lord did not gain Nicodemus, and turning from the "how" He declares the certainty on His own *testimony* from God: "We speak that which we know"; but they are what are now in His thoughts, not individually Nicodemus. "Ye receive not," and if I have told you the earthly part of the Kingdom, and ye believe not, how will ye believe if I tell you of the heavenly things that are the crown and glory of it? It is not merely "earthly things" but "*the* earthly things," definitely, I think, pointing out the two associated portions of the millennial glory, the earthly and heavenly. "Earthly things" and "heavenly things" are doubtless contrasted in their knowableness, but also in fact, as in Ephesians. "From God," says Nicodemus, but the Lord begins with earthly things shewing Nicodemus's ignorance, and then asserts His own real character.

—13, 14 go together then, but are alike inconsistent and commonly unintelligible to the natural man (compare Isa lv.).

I observe in verse 16 this (not to enter upon the full power of the sentence, which would require rather a sermon) implies the truth argued out by Paul in Romans iii. 22 in its positive affirmation; so I think in 1 John ii. 2. These however, remark, are the

words of our Lord when stating one of the two great general subjects of His Gospel. There is everything implied in this, that God loved the world.

In John our Lord always proposes Himself in His full character to the world. He views Him as *paramount to His mission* ("He who comes out of heaven is above all"), and therefore, includes it to the world. In Luke and Matthew we have the respective appropriations fully drawn out, though recognized here. Accordingly, verses 15, 16, 17 is the Gospel. And as to this then note the "earthly things," the necessary first principles of the Kingdom of God, which is "earthly things," to this extent. But the Gospel runs properly upon (within, say) the "heavenly things," including and resting on the Lord's death in result, therefore beyond it, "life eternal" (compare ix. 5, 6). They wished the exercise of the temporal authority of the Kingdom, our Lord looked further. Compare with the verses here following John v. 22-24. If the Lord was to exercise trying authority all must be condemned, etc., therefore the Lord sends a trying principle in the way of giving life and salvation, so that he that receives it does not come into the trying authority, the "judgment," but is passed into life from death. Our Lord is now a Saviour, but withal is, as He says, "for judgment" (John ix. 39). But, besides, He will "execute judgment," because, etc. Note the force as of this as to the resurrection of the saints, comparing ch. v. 29. It is not merely "all judgment," but "all *the* judgment." If we receive Him we have passed "the judgment," or more exactly are "not

judged." They therefore confound all things of the Gospel who look to a mere general judgment, in which all are, indiscriminate judgment of acceptance or otherwise; for the salvation comes first, that all might not be condemned. But this becomes the "judgment" to them who receive it not; so that he that believeth not "has been already judged." It is a deeply important principle, and involving the whole Gospel. And note there are the "heavenly things." This passage involves the whole testimony in its principles.

Our Lord had gone mentioning the "heavenly things" to the verge of His glory, and in doing so had touched on that on which it all rested, His Person and all the mystery in it, but stops short, as it were, to plant it where it found its place among the Jews: death. He descends at once then from the thought of His Being and Person, humbling His thought to service, Himself to humiliation: "No one has gone up into heaven." And then we have these most important essential points in our Lord's character: "He who came down out of heaven, the Son of Man who *is* in heaven." And then we have two great points in the humiliation: The Son of Man must be lifted up; God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, the Son of God. Both "that every one," etc. Both these we must view for right views: the Son of Man lifted up, the remedy for sin, the taker away of death for eternal life; the giving of the Son of *God*, the evidence of Divine love, the love of God. We must believe in the Son of Man lifted up, we must believe in the Son of God given,

to have just and right views of the Cross, and the love of the mercy. These exercises afford a large scope, for here undeveloped riches of the wisdom, perfectness, and nearness of God's ways, most large and wide, most infinite, let the Person of Christ, and His work, and the glory and extent of God's love in it, be seen; and men shall marvel, and we saved, and know God in measure in the fulness of His mind of blessing in Christ and by Christ, and Christ the manifestation of all this wisdom and fulness in Him; and this by the Spirit.

—13. The Lord then having dwelt upon the evidence that the glory of the Kingdom must surely be rejected, as its first principles were, by the Jews, proceeds to unfold the whole order of these, for which, in the wisdom of God, see Isa. xlix. That very unbelief would make its way. See also Rom. xi. at the end. That which was suited to their present admission into the Kingdom as a Kingdom of God they could not receive, much less the heavenly glory. Here our Lord leaves the "ye." He continues to unfold it to Nicodemus, but it is not as that which was of application to them. But the large fulness of the everlasting Kingdom which, in its principles, as in its circumstances, was of "every one that believes," a principle not adverted to in a former part, for we walk by faith, and not by sight. "And no man hath ascended up into heaven, save He who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven." The Person of Him who was the door must now be declared as immediately associated with this. Thus are heaven and earth linked. No man can report of heaven save He who came down, essential to His

Person, the great witnessing fact from God, even Him who even here is the unbroken link between earth and heaven, restoring this association; the Son of *Man*. They are three coincident and characteristic names of infinite value on earth: "Who came down out of heaven"; "The Son of Man"; "Who is in heaven." This is His character, circumstance, and characteristics in respect of that which is to follow.

But we have now a vast scene opened out to us, that which was immediately associated with heavenly glory, its reverse in this world, alike and uniformly unintelligible, and its present practical bearing as regards the Jew, and by which the Gentile was let in: the Son of *Man* must be lifted up. "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth ever. Who is this Son of Man?" Yet it was as Son of Man He was to have this glory. "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou so regardest Him? Thou hast made Him," etc. And so in Daniel. It was a matter, too, of eternal life, resurrection life, or the life of resurrection power; for all shall not die. This was a great, vast scheme, of which the Jew was ignorant, and of which his rejection of Messiah as presented to him as living, according to the principles of the Kingdom, was to be the instrument, and of which the only part now presentable to him, and which shewed how totally incapable he was to receive it, was the sufferings incident to it. But this, as connected with the "heavenly things," was of large and vast scope; this was not within the Jewish scope. It was the Son of Man; God so loved the world; every one that believeth; eternal

life. God so loved it (could a Jew believe this, as such?) that He gave His only begotten Son, that, etc. A Jew might see the heathen judged, condemned, in such a sending; but no, "the world," not to condemn, to judge rather, but that "the world" through Him might be saved.

The presented purposes of God, whether to Jew or the world, on which their responsibilities rest, are not the purpose of glory and result, which arises *in every instance* on their total failure as involved in that responsibility through the opposition of their nature to God, its weakness through the flesh. He sent, for example, Jesus to the Jews, that He might be their King, but there was a Remnant according to the election of grace. Nor did the unbelief of the Jew make the faith of God of none effect (see the same, Isaiah xlix.). He sent Him into the world that the world through Him might be saved; and still the way of His glory was through its failure, though it be our deep sin. Yet in purpose, so a Remnant, being made heirs with Him of the glory. Yet for this also it shall be judged. But it was a rejected, absent Saviour in which they were to *believe*, suffering, but still the *Spirit* convincing of righteousness, for He was gone to the Father. Hence the division (and saving of the elect); the believer, he never shall be judged: "but he that believes not has been already judged." This all was the great mystery which occupied the mind of Paul, that the Gentiles, etc. He has been judged already, for he has committed the great act of dishonour and disallegiance to the God of heaven; he has not believed on His only begotten Son.

But observe, this judgment is not (though it might be so) an arbitrary act of rejection for that dishonour. This is the judgment; it manifested the darkness of man's heart, and the evil which he loved. It was light which had come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. And this, in its principle, was universal; therefore only the elect, whom God changed supremely by His Spirit, were saved: "Men loved darkness." The wonderful accuracy of the Word of God! "For every one that does evil hates the light"; and "there is none that doeth good, no, not one," "they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable," even those who had the best light and the advantage of the law. It was then it had all the malignity of a rejection of the only begotten Son of God; but it arose from, and manifested, brought into judgment, the evil state of man's heart, the position, love of darkness, because they were dead in trespasses and sins. This, therefore, the Spirit now takes, and convinces the world of sin. "But he that doeth the truth." Again we have to remark the accuracy of our Lord's language. It is not "good works," for God had given them up to a reprobate mind, they were ungodly. But He speaks here of those who had heard and knew the truth as revealed, and by grace (associated always and exclusively with truth) did it. So in Matt. vii. Therefore He saith *doeth*. "He that practises" (without this "every one that doeth") "the truth." Such came to the light in Jesus, in whom all truth was, and who was the truth, the truth of God's character. Guile was not found in His lips.

But the character of God is now known only to man by revelation. He ought to know that which subjects him to God. But so Romans i. Hence Paul distinguishes in the same manner wrath against "ungodliness" (the general estate of man), and the "unrighteousness" of those who "hold the truth in unrighteousness." But when the light comes these must be proved, not only to be in the dark, and walking in darkness, but as "he that does evil hates the light." The thing is condemnable, and the person first, but the wrath is revealed upon the hater of the light so manifested, he "has been already judged"; and so "for judgment am I come" (ch. ix. 39), the full dispensed operation of this as flowing from God in Jesus, the Son of Man. The Son of God sent into the world is here fully manifested, often its principles leading through suffering to heavenly glory. In this, as it were, Nicodemus had no part. He had been as yet left behind by the first part. This was our Lord's testimony, the outbreaking of the view that was before Him; a glorious thought, an immense prospect, let down from God out of heaven, and turning thither again, when as in Him Angels were learning the great wonders and wisdom of God.

After this Jesus went into the land of Judæa On the whole we may remark (while the Saviour passeth not beyond the verge of that which is personal to Himself, as now manifested, and does not touch upon the heavenlies themselves), the very distinct address of the "earthly things," that which gave living Jews entrance into the Kingdom, and will in that day, and in which therefore faith is not spoken of, addressed to Nicodemus

as representing to this extent here the Jews, ("ye"). How this ceases when His death, the entrance into the heavenlies, begins, and the principle of faith in an apparently rejected and so absent Saviour, in which the "every one" at once broadly comes in, and God's loving the world is introduced, while the Person of the Saviour shines through all! But how rich and various is the matter of the Scriptures compared with any comment upon it; how its elementary and eternal truth, flowing from God's nature, can be brought to bear in their simplicity in the heart of him taught only in the necessities of his own conscience, while the depth of all wisdom is developed in the same in the Person and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, before which the wisdom of the proudest man succumbs! Note also the transition (13, 14), the moment the Lord touches on the full character of His glory, His essential glory, "Who is in heaven," to the full humiliation, to His being made the sign-post of the world's sin. Yet nothing can be more humble or simple than His statement of it. There are, then, two points mentioned, "that every one who believes on Him," etc.; first in which He acts from and for man so: "So must the Son of Man be lifted up, that," etc.; then God's love from which it flowed: "For God so loved the world, that He gave *His only begotten Son*, that," etc. This was God's part. Note, the only place where Jesus could be as fulfilling the requisition of God's excellency, justifying God, and acting justly, as Man, was to be this sign-post, as we have said, of sin, to have it stamped in abhorrence upon Him. The world thinks that there

are a great many other amiable excellencies in which they and God may take pleasure, for they think that He is altogether such an one as themselves.

—24. The public testimony, or preaching, of our Lord began after John was cast into prison, began from Galilee; but this place evinces that He was, by private instruction, gathering disciples, and His disciples baptizing before that. On the whole it makes the observations elsewhere made plain (compare Luke vii. 11 and iv. 14, and references). Our Lord's first actings and manifestation, not His public ministry, was at Jerusalem, save what took place at Cana, etc., and which does not appear to have been lengthened. Then He went to the feast; then returned into the country of Judæa, and baptized, continuing there; then hearing that John was put in prison, and that His enemies had heard of Him, He went into Galilee, chiefly continuing about the sea at Capernaum. In Nazareth He took the occasion of the passage of Isa. lxi. to present Himself publicly as fulfilling it; but observe, by the Spirit being upon Him, and thus accordingly there is where Luke begins his narrative of His matured ministerial labours.

—27. Nothing can be more important; it is the immutable rule of all office, and measure of all authority. Compare our Lord's declaration to Pilate, and Paul's statement of resisting the power, and the ground on which he lays the foundation of his own authority in his Epistles, particularly to the Corinthians. Then compare "not as lords over your faith." As to this *v.* 33 lays the ground. And then compare Proverbs xxx. 6. As to faith, there can be no authority;

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it is as believing (in the matter) the record which God has given concerning His Son. You may see also some observations in the printed paper relative to Paul's conduct with human powers.

In reference to this I recollect Luther to have acted wisely in a case brought to him to exorcise. And compare the sons of Sceva. In this view I conceive the relation of the twelve men on whom he laid his hands is inserted, it was a power properly apostolic (as see Peter and John going to Samaria), and a standing evidence of Paul's being an Apostle. He was clearly an extraordinary one, and careful observation will shew that the Scriptures have recorded the evidence of his qualification as seeing the risen Lord, so as to be a primary witness, and that the signs of an Apostle were wrought "in him." More might be added here, shewing the justness of the adaptation of the manner of his qualification to his peculiar office as Apostle of the Gentiles, but this is not the place; this applies to dispensation; for it need not be said that there could be no diversity in the matter of faith, though there were diversity of appointment and administration.

—28. There is heartfelt satisfaction (as in full confession of what the Lord has imposed, for this is a responsibility) in having assumed nothing beyond what the Lord has given. Let us take heed withal that we are faithful. Wherever we do we throw ourselves into the power (as far as we are concerned) of Satan, for God confessedly is not with us therein, and there is no telling what use he may make of this, for all the value of previous labour and character is thrown into it, on

the one hand, and the discredit of Satan's wiliness thrown upon that, on the other. This is one case, but the Lord's care is over all. Nothing can be more blessed than this testimony of John. It is, I apprehend, the just position of the Church; that is, believing Christians now.

—31. He spake the "earthly things" (the usual use of *ek* (from), compare *v.* 11); first "above all," as to Himself, His place, Person; *then* testimony. John was merely a witness.

—33. "That *God* is true." Some received Him, but none received His testimony. By grace some were made to believe in Him, and after received the Holy Ghost, by which they were then made to see and understand and receive the "heavenly things" in Him; and this was the difference of the apostolic faith before and after they were taught more especially that He was the Christ, the Son of God and King of Israel. They received the "earthly things," principles of His Kingdom, and looked accordingly for the earthly portion of the Kingdom, but they did not nor could not, through their fault, the "heavenly things" till the Holy Ghost was given them through His ascending on high, where He was set far above, etc., and gave it. Then they preached the gospel, the "heavenly things," with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Christ indeed spake "heavenly things" (of this see other notes), for He spake in the fulness of the Spirit; and though we have but the Spirit according to the measure of our several gift, yet as to the revelation the Spirit (that is, in the dispensation of Christ) is not given by measure;

we have the mind of Christ, in whom dwelt all the fulness, treasures of wisdom and knowledge, who was, etc., and Heir of all these things also, for in these last days He hath spoken unto us by His Son, therefore "he that has received," etc. It is not, therefore, "to men"; so in *vv.* 12, 27. Our Lord spoke as though Himself in the "judgment." In *vv.* 31 and, 32 He saw the power of this work. This great truth (*v.* 35) was that which sustained our Lord in the non-reception of His testimony (Matt. xi. 27). This accordingly is the argument, with the proof of the necessity of our Lord's sufferings, by the Apostle in Heb. ii. He did enter into the "judgment" for man, and therefore having this place, and undertaken man, and therefore suffering ("for it became Him") being made perfect He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him. Then the great fact as resting on His glory and place is stated, then the needful (through our sin and unbelief) manner of its accomplishment. So I take it verse 28 of Hebrews ix. is an answer to verse 27 on the question raised by it of how the "judgment" may be gone through. Here we have the present certainty. Verse 27 is their natural portion.

There is something blessedly perfect in the Lord's, and in John's answer also, which shines out the more in comparing them. Our Lord speaks in simplicity and power of the Kingdom, nothing of Himself, save in humiliation. But He spoke that which He knew, and testified that which He had seen; John in the simplicity of character which was of the place God had given him. The occasion which arose was the comparison of the

circumstances of himself and the Lord by his disciples. He answered, "A *man* can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven"; thus, while he humbles himself, really verifying the heavenly origin of his testimony. And their very enquiry, "He to whom thou barest witness," confirmed the truth of his word, also as to the truth of him and of his mission. But the full glory of our Lord was necessary to complete the picture or the testimony of the earthly and heavenly things, of which indeed He was to be the Head. But our Lord never glorified Himself, nor went also beyond the limits of His Jewish circumstances as to facts; therefore He closed with His death. Here we have His glory, and this in two particulars, which are the great subjects of full revelation in apostolic and apocalyptic revelations: His having the Bride, as being the Bridegroom, and being "above all," by virtue of the title in which He had descended from the Father (created indeed by Him and for Him) and which made the portion of man He had brought Him into heavenly places to exercise, being set above all authority and power, King of kings and Lord of lords (compare Col. i. and Ephesians i. and close of Revelation).

There is a sense in which the Jewish Church is especially called the Bride, and exclusively so, I think, in the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament; for though I think it is so in Canticles also, it is so in a peculiar way. But this is so rather as the Lord than as Jesus, when she is to call Him *Ishi*, and not in the full closeness of His identity with the Bride taken out of His side,

the Lamb's wife, the Man's wife, called in that day *Adam*.

Having spoken of the Lord, then, as the Bridegroom, which is His special glory, he speaks of Him in Person: "He that comes from above." First, His general and universal superiority; next, its special association; "he that is of the earth is earthly," though this as to the principle; that is, John in his place, office and ministry: "He who comes from heaven," as specially associated with the heavenly character and supremacy as at the head of the "heavenly things," in whom the heavens shall be known to rule. This is true in His title and Person as "come," and true in fact when indeed He is "come" over again "from heaven"; as so come, that is, in humiliation. Though such, He testifies what He hath seen and heard, and no man receiveth His testimony. He who receives His testimony, however, has set to his seal that God is true, for He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. But as both the personal relationship and the manifestation of the glory are accomplished in the Lord Jesus, the Christ, in that day, so shall this also of peculiar and rich blessing; for not only is He King of kings and Lord of lords, "above all," but His name is called THE WORD OF GOD, and consequently in that day we shall know as we are known, and in earthly places they shall not say, Know the Lord, teaching every man his brother, and every man his neighbour; for all shall know Me, saith He, from the least even to the greatest.

This then is a very rich and peculiar blessing, for now we know but in part, and therefore have to prophesy (for

others), and that of course therefore in part; but then we shall know, etc.; and therefore prophesyings shall cease, and we shall all have common communion in that which is known to and prized by all; and this, though by Jesus, is direct from God Himself. It is not here, observe, merely the Father, but the Sent One of God, who is come from Him, who is the Blessed and only Potentate, the, etc.; the King Eternal, incorruptible, invisible, etc.; for the mystery of His Person is here peculiarly drawn out, that which indeed is beyond our reach, known only to the Father, but all whose excellency is the specialty of our blessing, for He testifieth as Man, saying, I have not refrained Myself, O Lord, and that Thou knowest, to men, even His brethren, yea, as under Him even the unbelieving, "that which He hath seen and heard" with His Father in the glory which He had with Him before the world was (compare Proverbs viii., where Christ is specially Wisdom, the Revealer). But it is as the Sent One, "He who comes," that He is thus the Revealer. Nevertheless in the testimony deposited in Him there was all fulness. Hence the important testimony which follows: "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God" (as He is as sent the accomplishment of all these words in that day, "in Him Yea, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God by us") "*for*," and here is His especial state, which you will again observe is as Christ, and not as God, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure."

All the Spirit's mind, the mind of Christ, the wisdom of God, is revealed now in the Scriptures, Jesus Christ being the great Key; for till He was glorified, and set in

His place, it could not be so done, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet, for Jesus was not yet glorified," and God never gives the Spirit by measure. He gives *it* now. This could not be till Jesus was, because He was the One, the Man, in whom it was all to be, the appointed One, as He saith, "Behold My Servant, whom I have chosen, Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth: I will put My Spirit upon Him; He shall shew forth," etc. Men of old were indeed moved by the Holy Ghost; the Spirit of Christ which was in them did testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow; but He, the Son, on whom it was to descend because He was the Son, the Man of God's good pleasure, and all fulness of blessing and of communion be restored between heaven and upon earth, was not as yet come, and the Spirit could not be given. The authority of Sonship did not exist, the title of inheritance did not exist, save abstractedly in Christ; the inheritance was not acquired; there was no man in heaven to whom the Father had given, no Son on earth sustaining the deposit which was witness of the glory to be believed. But when Jesus, the Man of God's love, appeared, then the Spirit was given, the Person of the Holy Ghost became, and not previously, the inhabitant of earth solely in Him, and circumscribed to His Person, because in Him all fulness was to dwell there, but shed abroad according to the glory of the inheritance as soon as He had ascended on high into the power, and it became conversant as the power, and in the weakness of man, as from Jesus exalted over all things. In this fulness Jesus spake on earth, for it was by the Spirit not given

in measure He did and spake all things as from the Father; but on this we have not yet entered, for we have Him as yet merely sent of God and speaking (as a Man) the words simply of God, the Spirit not being given in measure by God.

Having come, then, to this great point, that God giveth not the Spirit by measure to His Son, we have another immense and hitherto unopened truth: "*The Father*" (for such Jesus manifested, being the Son whom God loved, proved by the Spirit given fully), "The Father loveth the Son." This is the blessed and glorious truth which shines upon and crowns the whole, the great crowning and all-comprehensive discovery in Christ, the essence of revelation; as one said indeed, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." But He not only sheweth us this, but that He loveth the Son, and this also through all the humiliation; and, further, we know by the Spirit He hath given all things into His hand; therefore "he that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son," not obeying Him to whom the Father hath given all things, "shall not see life, but the wrath" (not of the Father, there is no wrath there, not an atom, perfect fulness of blessing, of love; He is Father, always Father, and nothing but Father in love and perfectness, "the Father loves the Son" but) "of God." He is not recognized in the Son, nor is a son. The contrary is disobedience to Him whom the Father honours in the place of a Son, giving all things into His hand. He is not in the relationship of a son; he is not therefore before the Father, as it were; but besides, he actually disobeys Him on whom the

Father has conferred, and in whom the Father claims, all honour. "The wrath of God abideth on him"; for whenever a sinner meets God, wrath must be on him, for he is by nature the child of wrath. God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son. Whoever therefore meets Him in Him meets perfect love, and finds God his Father. Nor is it right to say God is reconciled, for He meets the world in perfect love, in the activity of His own love towards them that are lost. But this is not dealt with by the sinner; nay, either he rejects the authority of Him in whom it is expressed, who speaketh the words of God, so the wrath of God, as of love and authority passed by, abides on him. What else can? for *apeithôn* is not merely "believeth not," but it is the accumulation of evil in one act, *is not subject*, *pisteuôn*. The Son is believed in as of the Father, and having all things given unto Him. He is disobeyed, or not believed, as speaking the words of God; for if He were seen to be the Son, and so believed in, the Father and His love would be seen also (for He indeed was a Man, and we also), and that is eternal life; and then as alive in Him we should receive the Spirit also.

Thus does this chapter, whether to Jew in earthly, or in the fulness of heavenly places, open out that which the Lord is in them in accomplishment, and what He was in humiliation even (nothing less in Person and purpose), with also the gift of the Spirit since He was manifested in the flesh, given (when given at all) without measure from God, whereby we know sonship and the Father.

Note, in the introductory chapters of John you have the two parts of the truth of the Gospel, the revelation of all that the Lord is on earth, on to the Millennium, and the necessity of a new nature in man to receive Him or know the Kingdom. It is a revelation of God above dispensations, even if dispensations are to be introduced; and hence above what man is. Now, to apprehend and enter into them he must be of God, born of Him, to see and have part in them. But it goes a little further, though not speaking of heaven, or Christ's going there (for it ever takes up what is intrinsic), but of His being there. It presents *eternal* life, for in Christ was life. But to have that according to the knowledge of heavenly things which Christ has, the cleansing of the Cross must come in; that is, death to all here, all human associations; of course, all sin. He liveth in this life unto God, and in the Cross according to the absolute glorifying of God in reference to all that was here below contrary in any sense to His nature; not only He living, and is life, that we may live (and are born of the Spirit), but there is a dying to, a removing of, a glorifying God about, all that was of nature, so that we may thus live. He was Divine life in the midst of the evil, and perfect there; but He must bring us, through dying, to it, into a new condition where *we* are not mixed with the evil; thus eternal life.

A few words on the beginning of John, suggested by a remark in . . . . that Christ is not sent in the beginning of John i. I think that what Christ is is

absolute. Personal place is from i. 1, His Divine place (man rejecting, or ignorant), and a new birth, through His incarnation, and full work for the end, and giving the Holy Ghost in the way; down to the end of 34; recognized Son of God in manhood by the sealing of the Holy Ghost. In 35 we begin the historical work of calling. This goes on, as within Israel, in three parts, to the end of ii. 22, but within the limits of Israel (the earthly part), save that resurrection in Divine power in Him as God is given, ii. 18-22: John's ministry, Christ's ministry on earth, which goes on to the end, where the Christ of Psalm ii. is declared to be the Son of Man to whom Angels are servants, and then the Marriage and practical cleansing; but this in resurrection. Then in ii. 23 we come to the difference of outward testimony in Israel, and Divine operation, and that a totally new thing and system was coming in; the old thing, or outward testimony, of no avail, gone, and the new thing announced; man wholly born *again*, anew; the Son of Man crucified, the Son of God given; eternal life; and, on this ground, such in Israel would finally have the promises; but, as grace and power on God's part, it could go out to the Gentiles, and associated with heaven, through the Cross; the moral condemnation of the world, where Christ had been as light.

What follows is (given to its proper object all through) John's testimony. They are brought together for the last time, the Lord Jesus returning to Jerusalem. His testimony had been brought in for each witness, so to speak. i. 6-8, we have John's account of Him in respect of the first part as to Christ; 1-13, again his character

as to Christ come here ; 15, which is a parenthesis ; then 19, this as to incarnation and Divine existence, His then place. This goes on to 28, that as to His incarnate Person compared with John. In 29 we have another testimony of John, not to Pharisees, etc., but his own ; only (30) the same Person, referring to 15 (both to what is not received). But here, while identifying the Person, Divine and human, the work is introduced, in all and its double effect, the removal of sin out of the *world*, and the giving of the Holy Ghost meanwhile, connected with His being anointed, and so manifested Son of God down here.

Now (iii. 27) John gives wholly place to Him ; not alone personally, but that connected with the whole scope of the new estate in Christ. The Bride was His. This may be more connected with Israel, but is rather a general idea. John's ministry was, though greater than all, prophetic, and referring to earth. Christ, coming from heaven, was above all. Of that He testified, and no man received it ; but receiving it was setting to one's seal that *God* was true. Yet it was as the Sent One ; but the Spirit not given in measure. This was His testimony down here. *God* spake by Him with the Holy Ghost, and He revealed what was there whence He came. But, further, the Father loved the Son, and put all things into His hand, though a Divine Person. Then all this was not a dispensation, but of real and absolute dealing in eternal life. He that believed on Him had everlasting life. He who refused to own the Son would not see life ; the wrath of God abode on him.

This closes this prefatial presenting of Christ ; for

John was not yet cast into prison. In what follows He goes to pursue His own testimony to men, the world, amongst the poor of the flock.

In point of fact, John iii. 5 answers to the work of Christ on the cross for us; only here in spiritual cleansing and life; there in judicial cleansing and righteousness. For Christ bore our sins, and put away the fruits of the old man as guilt; but in glorifying God perfectly, so as to obtain for us a title in righteousness in the glory of God. So here the water is the cleansing of all our thoughts, affections, habits, and the Spirit the making us partakers of the divine nature: what is born of the Spirit is spirit (compare Ezekiel xxxvi.), which is indeed inseparably connected with our acceptance in the Beloved, our new positive position, for it is in life; though not only so, but by the presence of the Holy Ghost we have that place.

We are quickened into the new place with Christ raised from the dead, He having in that work, which gave us a title to be in glory, by glorifying God, having put away our sins by bearing them, and going down to death. He hath quickened us together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. We are in Christ, or in the Spirit (not in flesh). That is our new place. So we are born of the Spirit. We are cleansed, and forgiven all the fruits of the flesh, and we are born of water. There acceptance does not go beyond resurrection; for we are, or Christ in testimony is, then in the new accepted condition of man in righteousness, God having raised Him from the dead.

But then, in point of fact, the counsels of God had given us a place in glory, and Christ enters into that glory, not only as what, as Son, He had with the Father before the world was, but as having glorified God perfectly here below, and in a work done as answering for us, so as to bring us, according to and by the righteousness of God, into that glory. This is a wonderful truth, but it is God's righteousness, evidently and wholly Christ's work; only the question of righteousness simply is settled in resurrection; only the work which did it was such that in its full effect it could not stop there, but was sufficient, when it was God's counsel to do so, to give us a part with Christ in glory.

John i., ii. are complete in themselves. What Christ *was* (not relatively, however, but what He was) then what He *became* ("became flesh"); then His work and operation, Lamb of God, and baptizer with the Holy Ghost; and then John's gathering, where He is owned as Messiah and His gathering on earth (specially the Remnant in Israel); then the guileless Israelite known under the fig-tree; that is, in Israel, owning Him according to Psalm ii., and the Lord assuring him he should thenceforth see Him according to Psalm viii.; that is, as Son of Man, with the highest creatures waiting on Him.

Then comes the Marriage (of Israel), and the water of purification turned into the wine of festal joy (and the best) and judgment purifying God's temple, His Father's house; His death and resurrection being the

warrant for these acts of authority. But this brings in, though before His public ministry (which, though in Israel, was not in Judæa), the whole new ground of what was coming in; reception by outward, just, human conclusion of no avail; subjectively, one must be born again; a new life, divine life, and so wholly new (*anôthen*) even for the Kingdom, to see or enter into it; and Messiah rejected, crucified, but as Son of Man bringing in eternal life by redemption, and heavenly things, association with what was heavenly; meeting man's necessity as Son of Man, and revealing God's love as Son of God given, and this for the world; the wind blowing where it listed; though, even for Israel's future, earthly, part in the blessings promised, in the Kingdom.

The teacher of Israel might have known (from Ezek. xxxvi., for example), that this new state must be brought in. Eternal life is connected with the Cross, not with being born again; though it was the action of sovereign grace, and went out, where God pleased, as the wind. But men were perishing, and now received eternal life, salvation, through the Cross. He did not come into the world to judge it now, but to save it. But then came the responsibility and consequent judgment, which hung on the believing on Him or not. This was from light coming into the world, and men loving darkness rather than light. On the other hand, in the end we have the full blessing in Him by faith. He is above all, coming from heaven; tells what He has seen and heard, and no man receives this new kind of knowledge. So verse 11. But His words are God's words, the Spirit not being given by measure. Such His place on earth.

Further, as Son the Father loves Him, and has put all into His hand. He that believes on Him has everlasting life; he that does not shall not see life, but God's wrath abides on him. He is set up as God's testimony, with God's words from heaven, whence He came; and, besides that, as the loved Son the Father has put all things in His hand. Eternal life and wrath depend on His being believed in or the contrary. The responsibility is light come into the world, but the full character of what is involved in His presence (31-36).

Here we are far away beyond Judaism, even if the Bride be taken as Judaism; though it be a generic idea. With these prefatial chapters justly close. That they are such verse 24 shews. Chap. iv. begins the *history* of sovereign grace in a rejected Saviour: "Neither at this mountain, nor at Jerusalem."

These three chapters of John yet occupy me. First, the testimony of John. The first chapter is a whole. The second gives the two parts of millennial glory, at least their centres: the changing of water into wine at the nuptial feast; the refreshing (or, rather, purifying) of the Spirit into the joy of conviviality, and joy to which we abandon ourselves, the "wine that maketh glad the heart of God and man," drunk new in the Kingdom; and the judicial cleansing by the Lord Christ of the earthly worship and house of God.

Then, as to the testimony of John, it is remarkable, though there is abundance to shew that He was the

Messiah, how little direct testimony there is to this effect. It is His Person, what He is between God and the world, and the glory of His Person, not His economic position, which is in question, though Israel be recognized. We shall see more of this hereafter, when the abstract glory of the Lord is given. The nature of John's person, the witness to the light that was come, is very distinct. He is properly the light itself, but there was a man sent from God; a *man*, sent from *God*; he bears witness of the light, that all might believe.

When the incarnation of the Word is introduced, then this John bears witness that He who came after him was before him; as Man, succeeds; but, as the Word, as God, was before him. When the Jewish enquiry is presented, then he is not the Christ, but sent before *the Lord*, according to the prophecies. Herein he says He whom Israel knew not amongst them came after, but was preferred before him. He was not worthy to unloose His shoe-latchets. In this last it is not pre-existence and subsequency, but excellency; entirely superior, though succeeding or coming after. This really was the place of testimony to Messiahship; but it is to the Lord. He is sent before the face of the Lord, and excellency beyond comparison as to John himself, such as He was here.

Next we have testimony to the functions of Jesus as Saviour, and in the Church, connected with His Person and nature: Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world; a Man coming after, but preferred before, John, because He was before; that is, Man, excel-

lency, and pre-existence; also Son of God; and, finally, baptizer with the Holy Ghost.

In present testimony, as object of faith and affection, He is Lamb of God. Here the testimony, *marvellous in extent*, ends; for Jesus Himself takes up the calling and the manifestation of Himself, as Son of God, King of Israel, and Son of Man on whom the Angels ascend and descend. Accordingly hereon follows (as we have seen, chapter ii.) the two parts of actual millennial glory in their objects and service, not in His Person; that is chapter i.

Then, in chapters ii. and iii., we have the carnal reception of Jesus by Israel is rejected, and the necessity of Israel being born again to enjoy the promises stated; which introduced all, for a Gentile could be born again, being the exercise of Divine power; and the earthly and heavenly parts of the Kingdom, or testimony of Jesus, declared, and the rejection of Messiah; and the gift of the Son of God as regards the world, revealed as the basis of these things, specially the heavenly things not yet revealed. The condemnation (God acting in love) rests in this: that men hate the light, to which responsibility attaches itself, and to which here the testimony (of the Lord) returns.

CHAPTER IV.

In the meanwhile the Lord, till John was cast into prison, in just subjection to the Divine order having been pointed out as the Lamb of God, not Himself baptizing (this would have recognized it as the end of His ministry) ministered merely within the compass of John's ministry, baptizing for the repentance and remission of sins, the Kingdom of heaven being at hand. Nor is this ever said to be within you, though the Kingdom of God was (I believe we have remarked that the Kingdom of heaven is peculiar to Matthew). The ministry of the power of the Spirit ends in itself, that is, in its effects wrought, for it is formal and assigned; of Jesus not, for all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth, and He is the revealer of the Father; His work therefore may *seem* to fail; the Spirit's never, for the Spirit expresses and acts. The present mind in Jesus is all the fulness, which may yet not be developed. The acquiescence of our Lord in this baptism was therefore suited to that which was developed. His not baptizing Himself was so to that which was in Himself. When there is thought beyond the present state of agency this must be, though prospective light from God never fails to throw light on present conduct, for it is the same Jesus. It was not perceiving this which made the fifth monarchy men utterly err (as in spirit

also). Satan can make large use (under Divine restraint) of such errors even in good men; and error in act goes along with judgment here, for they cannot act in God's way; what is not the time to act, for God does not act out of the wisdom of His own time; therefore the instrument must be a wrong one.

But to proceed with our passage. Our Lord assumed now a distinct ministry, a ministry of testimony; not that He did not still offer Himself to the Jews as Messiah; but He had now primarily manifested Himself amongst them with ample miraculous evidence, and they had not received Him, or not in such a way that He could trust Himself to them. He was now to bear witness of what He was at large, having been rejected by them. Their envy indeed, it appears, had now so shewn itself that the rumour of His discipling the people having reached the Pharisees occasioned Him to remove from the neighbourhood; nevertheless the place which our Lord held in the dispensation of God toward the Jews is carefully preserved. There is no generalization of *office*. He had no thought of going to Samaria. He departed again into Galilee.

But the providence of God had ordered a full manifestation of further glory which was in Him, of the gift of the Spirit and eternal life, as the present power in Him of eternal life, separated from all Jewish association, though recognizing that salvation was of the Jews. He must needs go through Samaria. So it was arranged. It was shewn in the instance of all most opposed to Jewish prejudices. They had no dealings with the Samaritans. But it was the dispensa-

tion of gift and grace. It also set Jesus as the fuller source of blessing and promise to all the tribes of Israel than Jacob himself, or the water that he could give; broke in upon, as it advanced far beyond, in blessing, that association; for the way in which God subdues our pride in Jesus is the vastness of blessing. Nevertheless it arose out of the humiliation of Jesus. He had to ask water from a woman of Samaria, though King of the Jews. It was also to them as worthless that the message was sent. Jesus did not go to propose Himself to them, though He went when invited; as He said, Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. Yet the glory that was in Him, and what He was conscious of, in the character and bosom of God, went beyond His present ministry; so elsewhere.

Having seen their general circumstances and its position, we may notice the truths conveyed in this most interesting account, worthy of all our attention. The interview with Nicodemus shewed the necessity that Jews, children of the Kingdom, should be born again. Here we have developed, as a gift communicable to the desirer of it, if there were such, the grace of God, and the Person of Jesus opening the door, and breaking down the distinction there was between a Jew and a woman of Samaria. It is on the whole, then, a testimony to Christ as the Giver of the Spirit, and that contrasted with the temporal blessings and associations of the Jacob of old, and the displacing the distinction, to this extent, of the Jew and the Samaritan.

In the first place, then, we have noticed the grace of God, the great principle of the gift, the dispensation of

gift. The next point is the Person of Jesus: If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is who in this state of humiliation asking of you a Samaritan for water to drink, thou wouldst have asked, and He would have given. The freeness of the gift asked for is stated freely, and the result of such knowledge; but this all depends on the knowledge that God was *giving*, and what understanding the gift and of the Person and glory of Jesus in His humiliation. But these were spiritual things. They supposed a spiritual person. The natural man understood them not: "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." She was thus shewn ignorant of the gift, and of the Person of Jesus. "Art Thou greater," etc., than he who did all these things for us? It was needful, however, that the total alienation of the mind from spiritual things should be shewn. The woman was not opposed to listen, and the Lord would explain what He meant as to the nature of the thing, but it exhibited her incapacity to understand this also: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." She was simple and absorbed, that which was her sorrow, but all darkness as to the spiritual things. Such is the exhibition of the nature of this gift, and the capacity of the natural man to receive it. He stumbles at the first word.

There was something very affecting in our Lord's alluding to the request He was constrained to make. I am persuaded He saw this woman's mind was not closed, dark as it was; at any rate, even such a reception was in a measure new to the Saviour. It is

a wonderful picture of Him, weary and thirsty, and His glory withal manifested in His weakness.

In the next place we must remark that this living water is no influence from without producing results in the soil over which it flows. It is something given; the gift of God given to the person asking, given consequent upon the knowledge of Jesus, and bestowed by Him on request, as of God, flowing out of that knowledge: "If thou hadst known," etc. As to this we have spoken before on Ephesians i., Romans viii., and the case of our Lord Himself, and other passages. The next thing is it is positively given to the person. It is not merely a draught of something by virtue of those influences, but in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. This in the man is a constant indwelling spring, flowing into eternal life. Next I would also remark it is here spoken of the great general truth as personally indwelling for the hope of eternal life, its substantial witness of inheritance, not collaterally as conferred, as the instrument of power for the purposes of the manifestation of Jesus. The simple freeness of it is markedly shewn ("Ye have received gratuitously, give gratuitously"); and as to the receiver, If thou knewest, thou wouldst have asked, and He would have given. Knowledge of Jesus, itself the gift of God, is the only circumstance, and He is the giver. The freeness of the Gospel is here distinctly stated, put in its order of God.

We have seen the character of the gift of the Spirit by Jesus, and its freedom, and the utter and absolute incapacity of the natural man, though hearing the words, to understand the nature, or anything, of spiritual things,

or Jesus by whom they are given. "Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well?" "Sir, give me this water." But the Spirit of God hath another method by which, in the name of Jesus, it as Jesus takes up man where he is, and acts upon the conscience. We speak not of it now as indwelling as the water of life, but as acting in conviction by opening the conscience to itself. Nothing more simple in its power, where the discerning eye of God, to whom all is open and unconcealed, awakes by touching on the spring of its actual state, the consciousness of where it is (and such is the constant experience under the preaching of the word): "Go, call thy husband." You will observe that it is by stating the order of God, what would have been blessing if it had been, that the consciousness of her state was drawn out: "I have no husband"; and thus is Jesus the universal convincer of sin, for He is the fulness of the blessedness of God.

The 18th verse, though here explicitly given, because Jesus was He who was to be actually made known to her by it, is the work of the Spirit in every such case. It brings to light all our ways, and that with consciousness not only of them but of the light into which they are brought, that Jesus is there, by which we are made conscious of them. "Thou hast set my secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Conscience, real conscience, is exercised in the recognition of God, who has thus opened the heart as light in it, for that which maketh everything manifest is light, and Christ the Life is the Light of men, and this He is by His Spirit now. It does so responsibly now towards all, for "their sound went

into all the earth" (Rom. x. 18), effectually in the consciousness of those whom it awakens to find itself in the light. Whenever conscience as of God can be acted on, then the Gospel has a way, and hypothetically that is man.

The just effect of this is to lead the mind to look for direction, to look for the right worship of that God who in effect is really thus known (for, as we have said, real conscience is responsibility to God), and to seek it of course when the light of that God has broken in: "I perceive that Thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say," etc. But this passage serves here as a great development of the order of God's dealings, as we have seen. It was in her mind a question between Jerusalem and Samaria, upon indeed the ordinary plea of all false worship, "Our fathers worshipped." On the other hand, it was merely a "Ye say *we ought*." A convinced conscience enquired of Him as a prophet. The Lord answered her as a point He felt near His heart as come, the Son's word from God: "*Woman, believe Me*, the hour cometh" (He doth not as yet say "is come") "when neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, ye shall worship *the Father*."

The great source of worship is introduced, and then with the dispensations opening a larger principle than both, when the falsehood of one and the pride of the other (just now brought out in their practical rejection of Jesus, for doubtless this had pressed it on our Lord's mind, we must remember He had just left Judæa) would be lost in the fuller purpose of the Father's love. Nevertheless, in point of dispensation our Lord does not conceal the

unwelcome truth (how untimely if it had not been of importance!) that salvation was of the Jews. The manifestation of the Spirit then, by which we worship the Father, though it may cause in the just hour not to worship at Jerusalem or elsewhere, does not, when specially manifesting its liberality to the most profane and hateful to the Jews, and shameful amongst men, for its own, the Divine, glory, in any wise weaken or disannul the framework (it were impossible, and they are very foolish that think so) of God's dispensations.

But further, "The hour is coming, and *now is*" (for the Son is manifested), "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." They shall neither worship in falsehood they know not what, nor in pride and formality, if their formal object was right. There is something very blessed in this, very refreshing to the Lord's mind, just having found that those on whom His heart was set, His own people of old, rejected and refused Him and the Father. But there shall be true worshippers. Such the Father seeks. He needeth not. His nature is too high for these proud rejecters. Yet is there no pride in seeking in truth, answerable in mind and understanding to Him, His will, and what He is *as revealed*, and in spirit according to what He is. The Father then seeketh, but it is such He seeketh.

I can conceive nothing more blessed than this verse as coming from the Son of His love, sent into the world. At the moment, the state of Samaria and Jerusalem, the people of His love, was just brought before Him. It was manifestly the outgoing of His mind (though written for our learning and the very truth of the mind of the

Spirit from God; yea, so to speak, specially, and so it must when His mind came forth, for He spake the words of God), both here and from His conversation with His Apostles. It was a mind full of pain indeed, and as is ever the case when the mind is full of felt sorrow for the present state of things in those nominally associated with God, having the prospect of larger purposes of God's love (for He knew God) opening out before it. There is sorrow in that word, mixed as it is with blessing: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." It was perfectness, and perfect obedience in consciousness, which is true happiness; yet it was of that which was written: "Then have I laboured in vain, and spent My strength for nought; yet my work is with the Lord, and My judgment with My God. And He said, It is but a light thing."

There is peculiar depth to me in the union of these two words, "Woman, believe Me," and "the Father seeketh such to worship Him." There was a throwing Himself upon His Father, and a consciousness of the sympathy of the Father with Him in the spirit of His work which is full, full of what saints alone know, and Angels desire to look into. But the universality of the Father's character required always such worship. The Father seeketh such worshippers. But God *is* a Spirit, and they that worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth; they must so from His nature; they do not worship *Him* in so far as they do not.

This woman had not the Spirit, and therefore could but look to others to teach her about everything. She felt these were things reaching out into a far fuller and

richer system than she could be conscious of; they were out of her reach. She had been brought to this, to feel that all her wisdom was ignorance; but there was One who would tell her all things; for she had this only resource, she had heard and knew that Messias cometh, and threw her ignorance over upon Him. It was a happy moment for her soul. "I that speak unto thee am He," said Jesus. This was sufficient.

The disciples came up, marvelled; for neither could they understand the glory His Sonship set Him in. He could have sympathy with none but the Father here; the thing was out of their reach. He was talking with a Samaritan woman; what was the meaning of this? They had not the Spirit, and could see nothing of the largeness of the harvest which the Spirit (which dwelt in Him without measure) would bring in as the minister of the Father's love.

As we have seen the free gift of the Spirit, the total incapacity of man to apprehend anything about it, the method which God uses then to bring the soul into the knowledge of Jesus, through whom the Spirit is received, by bringing intelligence into the conscience, so we find here the effect at once in taking the mind off the things which filled it up, and hid it from the capacity of receiving anything, and that by the value of Jesus, knowing who it was that *spake* to it. The woman's whole engagement had been her water-pot; beyond that it went not; a more sensible and real thing than that which fills the mind of most. But it was now forgotten, or despised. She left her water-pot, and went into the city, filled with the thoughts of Jesus, to speak to the men (for where

the heart is full there is most forgetfulness of circumstances) of One who had told her all things that ever she did. Observe, too, the importance of Jesus in her mind had taken away the pain of the discovery of her state. This, she thought, must be the Christ.

The freedom of the Spirit finds its way most readily, and only (for it goes into a sinful world), in a heart where the conscience is most readily brought into humiliation and conviction (and so brought to Jesus, through whom the Spirit alone is received, and who must be known in order to its being received, and is thus known by opening the heart to itself, and presenting Himself as the convincing object of a heart which finds its resource therefore in Him, and thereon the testimony of who He is). *A priori*, therefore, in the free gift of this Spirit of life the poor sinner is the most in the way of the Kingdom, for the natural man receiveth nothing of it at all, and such a one has little to oppose to the light in the conscience when God pleases to shine in. Accordingly this poor degraded woman (for most degraded she was) was chosen of God (amongst the most rejected of men by those who had the Law and the promises) as the object in and through whom the revelation of the way and power of the Spirit of life should be made known to the world.

We have traced it here most imperfectly, even as to that which is noticed; but nothing can be more perfect than the way in which it is developed in the place. But this chapter should be read with the previous one, with which, in the development of the dispensations, it is intimately connected.

The men came out to see Him. The grace of God

does as it pleases ; but in itself learning and the like is a hindrance to the knowledge of God and the knowledge of Scripture and the mind of God in it, because it leads the mind to another access of approach to these things, not the conscience, which is God's way, the way of the Spirit. Learning may meet learning, and if one man give false, another meet it by the true ; but it cannot meet Scripture, for it meets conscience, and there is no learning in the conscience but that we are sinners. The mind is the subject of the Scriptures, not the Scriptures the subject of the mind, in God's way. Only leave the Scripture to itself, and it meets all learning, and needs none. God may give power to apprehend it to one more than another, but I say *it* knows, meets everything the proud heart of man can devise, and wants none of it, and nothing else, but in Spirit judges and divides all things, to the intents of the heart. I apply this to everything, everywhere, and throughout. There is nothing, I believe, which has so much impeded the study of prophecy as history.

I shall not dwell upon what passed with the disciples, save only to remark their incapacity to enter into spiritual thoughts, the way in which, coincidently with the whole subject, the Lord goes out into the whole prospect of the harvest which His Spirit should gather in, manifested in the state of this Samaritan woman (as partially in Nicodemus). I do not mean merely individually in them, but brought out before us through them. The thoughts of His mind are deeply interesting here.

Next we may remark the character of the fruit. There was the consciousness of Jewish rejection, the emptiness

of Jacob's well; but it was that which was to flow from the power of the Spirit, bringing in a new vitality, *eis zōoen aiōnion*, fruit unto eternal life. It was into this they were to be gathered, that the sower and the reaper might rejoice together, for God had broken the apparent result of the seed, it was not to be eaten as such, that the reaper also should be partaker of a common joy, for herein was the saying true, "One soweth, and another reapeth." The Apostles in that character were but reaping the fruit which the prophets and righteous men, and above all the Lord, had been sowing, whose hope and whose labours seemed to perish in the earth. In such a time better is it it should be so. If we work according to what is present we may reap our own harvest, but it shall be a poor one; but if we sow according to the glory of that which is to come, if we sow by faith, others shall reap it, but we shall rejoice together. It could not have its place of manifestation now. The Lord Himself had but this comfort. He was sowing, yea, He was Himself to be the dying seed of all the future glory.

"I sent" I take to be characteristic: As Apostles, this is your office; be ye not proud, or wise in your own conceits. I have sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour. Others (for our Lord took not the honour to Himself alone), other men have laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. But our Lord's joy was in the harvest, that which should be brought in; theirs in it softened by the recollection of who had sown the seed. He who is lowest, and works for unseen fruits, is surely highest, and more simply doing in faith the will of

Him that sent Him; for success is present support even for the weak. Nevertheless, "he that reapeth receiveth wages." He speaks not of reward to the sower. His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work.

Nothing can be more distinct than the going forth of the Saviour's mind into that into which, by the operation of the Spirit, it broke, upon the rejection of His Person and ministry in its real character by the Jews; while yet He, simply following the will of God in His present ministry, being perfect in all things. We may remark further that His place, and the place of His disciples, is here revealed in this opening system in perfect detail and principle and order. Our Lord, though so now, and above all in specialty of character, He who sowed, yet does not here (for He was rather putting them in their character in the opening dispensation of the Spirit) set Himself forward as such (that would have been rather giving value to His grief or trial that He knew only, that is, the Lord) but in His place in the dispensation: "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour."

From the 34th to the 37th verse there is the full revelation of His and their place as now passing out of Judaism into the harvest of the Spirit, not His to gather, but having the Spirit just to do His Father's will in the limited (so apparently) sphere where He was. Next He saw forth into it (all His comfort). Next the reaping, and what it was even unto life eternal (for we have here the ministry of the Spirit as well as the power before). As Christ was the giver of that, so the sender in this.

Next, therefore, this ministry of the harvest being introduced, we have His place, as observe: "I sent you to reap," and theirs in the consciousness that they were but reaping the labours of others' sowing, for "one soweth, and another reapeth."

This power of the testimony of Jesus in the conscience is the great inlet of the knowledge of Jesus, the way in which (because man is a sinner, and He would humble man's pride) God will visit and make Himself known to man. But is this all that commends Jesus to man? No, far from it. Many believed because of this testimony, even at second hand. It was this made His entrance, it was on the ground of this they besought Him to remain with them. But everything confirmed (there was no flaw, nothing wanting) the great truth that this was the Saviour, the Christ. All was perfectly conformable; yea, more, adding a stronger ground of faith, now that the entrance and inlet into the heart was given, than the other of the glory of Him now recognized present with us, in, "Now we believe, not because of thy word; for we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this is *indeed* the Christ, the Saviour of the world." The other was the inlet; but, once admitted, all is consonant to the full glory of Him whom the heart is now taught to receive.

For observe the perfectness of the confession of these Samaritans. What a contrast to "We know that Thou art a teacher sent from God"! "We know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world, the Christ." Whence this large knowledge? From the depth of a humbled heart. The sinner recognizes the full character of Jesus,

that which is personal to Him, although His humiliation develops to him the full glory of Jesus, because he is in the position, and taught of God, to recognize it, to which, and upon which, the wisdom of God, the full glory of Christ, has been adapted and formed. He is a Saviour.

A sinner is neither a Jew nor a Gentile, but a sinner, and therefore can understand Christ as the Saviour of the world. And He is Christ; but the convinced sinner, having received Him therefore in His full character as Saviour, finds Him present, and knows Him also fulfilling all the testimony of God, and the expectation of the heart of man led thereby. The sinner, the conscience, is the great unraveller (being of grace and gift, and that for sinners) of all the mysteries and purposes of God. Compare the apprehensions of Nicodemus with those developed here, the very glory which was the satisfaction of Christ's heart in the rejection of the former, and you will see the contrast and the difference.

The Spirit of God, we may remark, for we are following His work in this chapter, reveals Christ in His full character: the Saviour of the world, the Christ; His full power and glory, and the special character in which He is manifested as the Anointed One; character and also specialty of His personal estate and relationship, for the Christ includeth both. The understanding of the mystery, says the Apostle, of God, even of the *Father* and of Christ, into which we cannot enter now particularly; but it is manifest that this openeth out all things, and the more it be enquired into the more it will be seen, as regards man, these two things embrace every-

thing: "the Saviour of the world," "the Christ"; and here into all this fulness, and He only, doth the Spirit lead us, and the inlet thereof is His first work as from without, convincing us of sin by Jesus the Saviour, Jesus the humbled One, manifested in the power of God thus known.

The union of the work of the Spirit in the individual conscience, and the full development of the glory of His dispensation in Jesus, so fully brought out in this chapter, is of the greatest importance; and this, as well as the two great points severally, has need to be entered into, that we may be able to understand either really; for it is by His work in one that the other is developed, as seen here, as it is by His indwelling in Jesus that the dispensation itself is set on foot and accomplished by Him as the giver and sender of it.

Let us briefly recapitulate the heads of either presented to us in this chapter. I remember nothing (nor am I surprised at it when I remember what it is, the transition of Jesus's mind, as it were, into this dispensation through His humiliation) that has so enlarged itself upon, and affected my mind, as this chapter, judging by my present thoughts; the touches of deep feeling in our Lord's address; the development of the doctrine and of the relationship in which all stood; besides the truths taught, alike act upon one's mind. But it was my purpose to recapitulate.

But, remarkable as was the character of the testimony then, our Lord did not continue in Samaria. Gracious as His reception was (for they were not the objects of His Father's will; that is, in service of ministry), after *the*

two days He departed thence. That was not the object of His ministry, but neither could Jerusalem be the proper scene of it, nor Judæa. A prophet had no honour in His own country; and that was His country indeed and in truth. But His work was not lost there. There were those there amongst whom, by the testimony there, offered a scene of ministerial sojourn; meeting in some compensating weakness the desires of His heart. They were Jews, the just objects of His desire and ministry. They went to the feast; they were poor and despised; a good thing could scarce come out of Galilee.

How remarkably we see that it is amongst those who have the greatest apparent advantages, that which is established in religious economy, that the power of unbelief is found! Samaria takes the lead, and Galilee is the resource of our Lord. Blessed be His humbled name! It is here in principle, for this passage is the investigation of the sphere of ministry, its character and results. It is not in Samaria. They were not Jews, nor of the truth, nor salvation of them, and therefore liable specifically to intelligible judgment. Not amongst the Jews, for there *prophetically* He was rejected, but here where there were Jews, that is, those recognizing the rectitude of the Divine administration; they went to the feast, but not in the pride of rejection, which the supposed possession of religious privileges invariably involved, when the Spirit was not in it in power (there of worship); yet here also weakness of reception in His prophetic and personal character, though not rejection or envy, the true position towards or against rejected power. But our Lord's mind was set upon His re-

ception by virtue of His word carrying the demonstration with it in itself of whence it came, and His Person ("they received Him" because, etc.); as elsewhere, Believe *Me, or else* believe Me for the very works' sake. This was moral reception. Hence He complains, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Yet the Lord gave them this, but it was a fault with them.

The Samaritans, observe further, received Him much more brightly: We *have heard* Him ourselves, and are *sure* that this is the Saviour of the world, the Christ. Hence the largeness of their apprehension for His word, being mixed with faith, told the fulness of His moral character. Hence also we see the supposed title to judge, and the assumption of conformity of God's dealing, with the assumed title to be the scene of their missions is one grand bar to the power, which always works according to God's character, and not man's, or his expectations short of the Spirit. For indeed their state made them subjects of judgment, and turned things upside down as special objects of judgment. Thus, though not obstinately opposed, not having the same ground for jealousy, the same spirit of unbelief manifested itself in measure here. Yet they had the benefit of all the miracles done at Jerusalem, morally there seeming to be lost, for they "received Him." The jealousy of the Jews where those miracles were done did in fact exclude Him.

This is the general doctrine and dispensation presented here by the Lord's reply to the ruler, and the facts and time connected with it. There were but two miracles wrought here; hitherto only one, and that unsought by

the Lord. Yet here was faith shewn. The ruler believed, and all his house. We learn also how little we know when the Lord works by His ministry in any place. Let us do His will in the place of His will, and His own results will be wrought by it; though, as Jesus was, we may be pained and humbled by it. Had He done all these miracles in Galilee His reception as Prophet had been marred, the just expectations of the Jewish people unmet, and God in this seen unrighteous, the evidence of Him unsatisfactory, and their real character and state on the other hand undrawn out, as it really was by patience in that ministry, knowing their mind (as it appeared when disciples joined Him), though apparently disposed to believe on Him. But in the apparent frustration, as Jesus was tried, and learned obedience, etc., and so shewn forth, so all the order of God's perfectness and man's evil was shewn for our blessed profit.

—48. I have stated the general principles of the difference, but there are many circumstances in this interesting story exhibitory of the individual development of faith connected with these principles; they believed when they saw the miracles. We have traced the difference of the Galileans, but here individual faith is shewn. Our Lord puts it forth thus: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The mind full indeed of its present necessity, and not looking out to the prophetic character of Christ, yet leans upon His power to do it, not merely satisfied on seeing it.

Jesus puts him on the power of His word, acting on his necessity, drawing out to crave and be willing to believe the power, yet taxing it no further than to bring

it to that, he rather yielding to his sorrow, yet at the point when it was stretched to exercise faith, saying, "Go, thy son liveth. And the man believed the word which Jesus said to him." Here then there was definite faith, the poor "courtier," who thought perhaps he at any rate should get Jesus, was thrown upon the necessity of his case as a man to believe His word; and he believed, and went. He was put in his right position, the humble position of faith, and received a blessing on his faith (compare the Centurion in Luke vii.) and before the time he could have received the blessing, had he had his own way, his heart was refreshed with the comfort he sought, his servants coming out to bring the news, and enquiring the time (for it is upon the word, and belief in the word, the stress is laid), he found it was the time of the word believed that the fever left him, the blessing of faith.

Jesus's going down might not have been for life. His hope was "ere my child die"; "for he was about to die." But the decision of Jesus, which meets faith and requires it, is always better than our unbelief. It was mercy to put him on it, and what blessing is then in it! It is belief in Jesus's word that marks our first character of faith. The power of this establishes us in the ascertained blessing of having so in the dark trusted in it.

—54, which is material for the purpose (we have already noticed it), I should translate a little differently. It is manifest he refers to the miracle of Cana: "This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana," etc.; and here: "This second sign again did Jesus, being come," etc. When He came, there were available signs done in

Galilee, and believed on there. Here, I take it, closes the view of our Lord's general ministry, the principles of it being brought out. The rest comes to be a full exhibition of principles, and the reception of Him in Person, and so delineation, or exposition, declaration, of what He was, the presenting Him to the Jews by something leading to the evidence of *what* He was, and therein drawing out their enmity; and, while He glorified not Himself thereby, developing the position which this held in the world. This marked His Person, Sonship, manifestation of God in the flesh, His shewing forth the Father in His glory as only begotten Son, His unity with Him, the consequences of His manifestation in the flesh, and the manner of its operation in it broken, and the life given in the spilt blood, the food of life, its death the seed of life, His lifting up the calling power, with all that was deep and Divine in Person, and glorious in results as Man. In a word, it is an exhibition of the Son whom no man knoweth; and this as upon the Jews, and connected with all their typical exhibitions, in which they are brought close, and more definitely investigable, and in their application too; for in this the feasts, etc., take the Lord up, that is, in His association with the fruits in man and the Jews.

Note, the first miracle in Cana of Galilee was (as noted heretofore) the expression of the change from Jewish purification to the joy of the millennial [rest], when Jehovah shall espouse Israel in truth; as the subsequent acting at Jerusalem was the judicial cleansing

part of the same period. But from that act all is changed as a present thing. He receives not man's acceptance of Him by mere human faith. A man must be born again. Instead of Christ received, the Son of Man must be crucified, and heavenly things are believed thus, and every one and whosoever believeth the sphere of action, and John Baptist reveals Him fully as to His Person and testimony as well as relationship with Jerusalem as bride (iii. 29-36).

Hence (iv.) He goes Himself to Samaria, and God's gift, man's conscience, spiritual worship, the Father seeking such around Him as worshippers, and the Saviour *of the world*, are brought out. Then He goes to Galilee; that is, not established Judaism, but the slighted objects of God's mercy in a really fallen Israel.

Thereon the second miracle in Galilee is the life-giving power by faith. He arrests the power of death when approached in need, as able. This was His present service. He comes in this second character into Galilee, His Messiah reception being out of question; an analogous and larger expression of the full, real state of things *dispensationally*, which thus is not His going down to heal, but the child really dead. Then He heals by virtue going out of Him by the way, where He is touched by active faith, and afterwards restores to life; Israel being really dead, but in God's eyes only asleep; that is, laid aside for a season, though morally dead. This second miracle, then, is in special connection, but contrast, with the first.

CHAPTER V.

There are two points in this chapter, besides the witness: the relationship and relative position of the Father and the Son, and their working, the working of both and either. This is introduced by the necessity of man, the poor man, and brought out the thesis as regarded the Sabbath (which should be in the day of blessing): "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," this being put as a consequence. In fact, this verse embraces the whole chapter. It was amongst the Jews at Jerusalem, and bore upon their present system. The Lord owned their present obligation; He was at the feast; He went up to Jerusalem. It may not even have been a prescribed feast. It was not material to the argument; the fact was elsewhere. The specialty of it is associated with the argument.

As to the validity of the questioned paragraph it is not very material. If genuine, it brings the moral of the passage (which rests on what is undoubted) into more specified dispensatory result, the full life-giving and judicial power of the Son brought into juxtaposition with the weakness and unprofitableness comparatively of the administration of Angels. The weakness of the means, as requiring the working of man, contrasted with the will-working of the Father and the Son, is the full moral truth of the passage; and the facts of the case, as noticed

and reasoned on, are substantially supplied in what follows.

The angelical ministration of the Jews, and all that required the exertion of man, failed as a remedy for evil when there was real destitution and need, what required it most and called out most compassion. It came to "I have not," for he was "under his infirmity." The Lord knew this, He had compassion, He felt for such. The point only He puts is, "Wouldest thou become well?"

The answer on which the point of the whole case rests is, I am weak and *incapable* to use the remedy. It is a remedy (so was the whole system of the Law, the angelic system) which supposes the strength, even if sick, which in real truth is needed. It was precisely the picture of the Law (compare Rom. iii. 3, and indeed the end of vii.; and also v. 6; as see also Acts vii. 53), for while it proposed health it required the strength to obtain it which the sickness itself deprived it of. This case also implies as there a converted will under the Law, without the power of life. This is the point which our Lord meets, and occasions the development of the life-giving power of the Son, and consequently His judgment as Son of Man. In Paul, that is, the Romans, it arises as the question of righteousness, the truth of resurrection, sonship rising up out of this, that is, out of the principles on which this is founded and evidenced, the presence of the Spirit dwelling in a man; the connection of which two subjects, as brought together in the Spirit, is not seen, I suppose, in their then *given order* by many, and which seems to me to solve many contradictory assertions

of God's children (I mean on the subject of what they call holiness, etc.), who have these truths partially. And in truth it is a view in which the full order of the chapter has not presented itself to mind as now, so as to open it out.

But to return to our chapter, and the Lord's discourse here. Jesus met the whole case at once. His word commanded evil; His word was in power; when heard, life-giving; but it was according to His will in power He said, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and," therefore, "took up his bed, and walked."

The fact is then mentioned on which hangs the reasoning of our Lord and the Jews on the real position in which things were according to the mind of God. It was Sabbath on that day; could the Law give rest? The Jews said to the healed man, It is Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. The reply at once brought the question to issue: He that made me whole bade me do it. It ought to have brought out the conviction of One present in power of health, acting in and from God. But the Jews preferred resting in their own ordinances (in which they had found no rest, and had not kept) to recognizing *the Son*, the Heir of all the ordinances. I observe here that it was not faith in Jesus here, but the exercise of Jesus's power in will, as flowing from Himself. Therefore it is noted that he did not know Jesus, nor afterwards, till Jesus met him, and spoke to him in the temple. Therefore Jesus treats him as still under the discipline of the Law: "Behold," take notice of this, "thou *art made whole*" (it is not, Thy

faith hath saved thee, or the like); "sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee."

It was then the supreme exercise of Jesus's prerogative on which He founds His argument, as the Son having had compassion on one as it were dead, incapable of anything (or therefore of helping himself under law), and quickening whom He would. Accordingly the Jews persecuted Jesus. They set themselves up on the righteousness of that which they had not kept, in enmity against the Son, Jesus the Saviour. He did these things on Sabbath. Our Lord's answer embraced the two great points, and at once brought the whole question to an issue. He was the Son: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." God had not entered into His rest as a God of love, as the Father, but being such must yet work, and in the manifestation and Person of the Son. The rest of the seventh day was the rest of the creation; and in the Law the creation could not find its rest. God rested from His natural works then, and this also the Law took up, and witnessed, but it could not accomplish it in man, for sin had entered in the flesh, and it was weak through the flesh. If man were to have a share in this rest (and this was the purpose of ordained and dispensed rest), it must be by the working *of God* in a new will of His *love* and power. Sons were to be brought into glory, God's mind was to rest in the surpassing fulness of His own love, in and by the Son manifested in honour in it, for man was ruined, could have no part in God's rest, therefore God steps out of His place, "worketh," that we might enter into His rest, through the work of His

own power and will *anew* on man ruined and dead, impotent even for rest, as the Law shewed him to be.

The end of this was that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, knowing God in His new character, even as Father, born of God, begetting sons unto glory, and that in and by the Son, that He might be honoured even as the Father. Hence this most unboundedly important and comprehensive expression, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The rest of His love God had not yet entered, nor could not yet enter into. However far they might be from His mind, they might rest here. The Son of God's love could not. It was the time for a Saviour, for the Father and the Son, to work. It was then the new work of Divine love, as contrasted with the imbecility of the Law. But neither in this case was judgment therefore to flow upon the Law; it was all to rest upon the honouring, the recognition, of the Son whom they could not see, though indeed they did indeed see. Accordingly they at once see it in this light; they would tell Him because He not only set aside the Sabbath but called God His Father, making Himself equal with God. Our Lord proceeds accordingly to open out this to our Spirit-taught instruction, for indeed it is a mystery, though full of blessing. There are two points: His Sonship as Man, as being Son of God. It is the Son of Man, observe, as He calls Himself, who is speaking, the Son of God *in this world*: Jesus makes Himself equal with God. So He says, "That ye may wonder."

But to follow this: I am assuming, says our Lord, no

independent, distinct authority. I do nothing from Myself (so the Spirit speaketh not "from Himself"), but I follow the Father in His works, and whatever He does I do; for there is no distance, difference. "The Father loveth the Son." The outgoing of God the Father's mind is in Jesus, in the Son. It cannot restrain itself. "This is My beloved Son, in whom," etc.; therefore shews Him all things Himself doeth; there is nothing that is not in common; this too of Jesus in the world (compare the beginning and close of Revelation; "I kill, and I make alive"; and Isa. l.). So, "For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." The Son is the agent, as it were, of the Father's manifestation, "God manifest in the flesh." "He will shew Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." Here our Lord seems to allude to this judgment which He was conscious was upon them, as not seeing the Son. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." "If I had not come amongst them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done amongst them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father." As He says, "Believe Me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake." Our Lord therefore states the two great characters in which the Son is thus manifested to His honour, which is the hinge of all, one in community of work with the Father, who "sheweth," etc., the spiritual, life-giving power of

the Gospel, as I suppose, originating in the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Life is the object of this ministry, as observed elsewhere: "They that hear shall live." This "now is." It is in the power of our Lord's first coming, and by the power of the Spirit pre-eminent above dispensation; therefore perhaps before even the final dissolution of the Jewish economy (compare iv. 23). But "the hour is coming, in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth"; as having all committed to Him by the Father, that He might be honoured wherein He had been humbled.

It was a fellowship with the Father and with the Son which was proposed in this work, and through which the rest of God was to be obtained; and this in life-giving power to the dead, as 1 John i.; and this, observe, as there stated, in that (even the Son) seen, heard, looked upon, handled, of the Word of life. "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." In this the great power is manifested, also all the blessing; therefore the Son does it coincidently with the Father, according to His will. He quickens with intrinsic power, though with the same purpose. But the judgment was the exercise of authority, not of blessing, nor properly witness of Divine power. It was not the communion of life with the Father, in which we also were to participate, that we might have rest. The Father therefore "judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men," even those who rejected Him, who refused the Son as Jesus in the flesh, should submit whether or no to the Son, Jesus in the flesh, that *all* men "should honour the Son,

even as they honour the Father." For as power and blessing is the evidence of God to participators in conscious knowledge, so authority is the source of honour to them who have no community with the Person honoured. Herein then is the great development of that which is manifested in Jesus, as contrasted with the Law, in which man, the sinner, could not in himself enter into His rest. The judgment is given to the Man dishonoured. Nevertheless, herein was the Father also dishonoured, for "he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him."

Having stated the great broad principles as it related to the Persons of the Father and the Son, our Lord proceeds to develop its application to men as the objects and subjects of it. It is as receiving the word of Jesus we are quickened. "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth," etc. Thus we believe Jesus as sent of the Father. "He that receiveth His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true," etc. But there is a perception of the Person also herein, as well as the mission. At least, it is involved in it, though not expressly. But there is a reception of the mission as by the word, and Jesus herein: "He that heareth My word, and *believeth on Him that sent* Me," that is, the Father. However, He here speaks of Himself as the word or speaking, for so He speaks, and thus we hereby know the Father, by the revelation of the Son, and that He is indeed the Son hereby; but I say He here speaks of Himself as speaking the words of God, and this by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, wherefore also as doing it now by the Holy Ghost it is equivalent, which is important to observe; for He

does not say, Whosoever believes on Me, the Son, but, "Whosoever hears My word, and believes on Him that sent Me, hath"; for it is the manner of its operation (as revealing also the Father, the Sender in love and power in Jesus) that the Lord here speaks of, not the Persons acting, for He spoke as Man, though the words were to be believed as God's (and led to believe on Him that sent Him, and therefore Him). So also He judges as Man, but the judgment is God's; for this is just the mystery, His manifestation in humiliation in the flesh. He therefore that receives Him in this character has seen indeed the power of God in Him, and recognized Him as sent of God, believing on *Him that sent Him* in such. This is the manner of it. The work has been wrought; he "hath everlasting life."

The other manner in which the Son's honour is developed has therefore no place or opportunity in him (or indeed it would be, as it were, denying the real power in the former manner); he "does not come into judgment." The power has been manifested in another manner in him; he "*is* passed from death unto life," a life therefore having (being by this faith) fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, with Jesus the Man and the Father that sent Him, but the Man Christ, the Son; as He says, "With His Son *Jesus Christ*." The "judgment" is one thing given to Jesus, and into which those quickened by the Word believed, and believing on Him that sent Him, cannot come; for then He would be judging the Father's children, and, we may add, His own redeemed.

This is the broad distinction, then, between the

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persons, subjects of this power ; those believing the word, *hearing* the word, and believing the Sender, thus quickened, have passed into life, and do not come into judgment.

The state of the subjects, and the full manifestation and manner of the power are then stated ; for these words (*vv.* 24, 25) are the practical address to men as the objects of it. "Verily, verily," said our blessed Lord, "the hour is coming" ; that is, in the dispensation of the Spirit, when He should be "declared (*diōrismenos*) to *be* the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" ; "and now is" ; for He had indeed life in Himself, though now not manifested by the Spirit in power to the world ; "when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son *of God*" ; for indeed the Jews were as dead thus towards God, as men, as were the Gentiles ; "and they that hear shall live." They shall all hear. "I say, Have they not heard?" So, "My sheep hear My voice." (Compare all chap. x.) They that hear receive life in the hearing. So, in chapter vi., they saw the Son, and did not see Him ; they heard the Son, and did not hear Him. Awful word! "For the heart of that people was waxed gross." "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son," even Jesus, "to have life in Himself" ; and the words have the quickening power of life. It is the communicating vehicle ("the just live by his faith," in this sense also, as it is "the law of the Spirit of life"). "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." In this, observe, in acting He acts as Jesus speaking, to whom as Son it is

given to have life in Himself. But it is the voice of Son, even of God, that is heard, and heard gives life. "And He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is Son of *Man*."

It was in this He purchased the glory, it was in this, as humbled, the glory became due. "Wherefore also," that at the name of the dishonoured Jesus, "every knee should bow," etc. It is as Man He is entitled, as Man He was the great Redeemer of all, and purchased also all as Master, though they may deny and dishonour Him (for this term *Master* [*Despotees*] is used of the purchased), dishonourers therein dishonouring God also, yet in the Person of the Son (for "he that honoureth not the Son"); therefore as a Man He was dishonoured, as a Man alone occasion could be found to dishonour Him, as Man He shall be honoured in judgment on those who herein dishonoured Him, His servants who denied Him.

But not only so, for there is a double ground. He has it as Son of Man in title over all, as the Man set by God over all, the Man that was the Redeemer, as such, of all; that is, as obtaining the title in virtue of His death; the Man that was dishonoured of all even in death, "whom none of the princes of this world knew, for if they had," etc.; for indeed in rejecting Jesus in the flesh, the Jews to this extent made themselves even rejecting their distinctive Messiah, losing their King, and having no king but Cæsar. But King they shall have, even as many as the Lord their God shall call. Woe, woe the day they rejected Him! woe, woe the day! But it shall be brighter through the riches of

His grace than ever; *that* indeed shall be life from the dead, through Him that wept over them rejecting Him. Hasten it, Lord, in its day, and make us taste, oh, how ought we to taste, who have dishonoured Thee manifested in Spirit, that is, in glory, Thy long-suffering, Thy long-suffering! Alas, for Jesus rejected! Surely may we say, "He was despised and rejected of *men*." Strange, strange infatuation! Was it indeed in that He got the tongue of the learned?

It is as Son of *Man*, then, that He exercises judgment, the exalted Man; for He was despised even as the Son of God manifested in the flesh. "Marvel not at this," that is, the quickening of the dead at the hearing of His voice, or that the Son hath, even as the Son of Man, life in Himself, for this is the substantive point previously stated; for it is the rejection of Him as Man, as having life in Himself as the Son, from which therefore flows that authority is given to Him as Son of Man to execute judgment. Also as Man He has the communicable life in Himself which as Son of God He can give, and has to give, to others. As thus manifested in His manhood He is rejected; and therefore in His manhood, in this very character, He judges. Here therefore the committal of judgment to Him is but illustrative of the character in which He is the life-giver, and in which, as rejected, to complete the evidence of its truth, He becomes Judge for its rejection on those rejecting it, thereby illustrating its truth.

In this then, I say, the life-giving work only is stated; that is, substantively; the judgment merely corroborative of this, as given to Him, because He is the Son of

Man, in which character He was rejected, and in which character He is revealed to us. Judgment is the evidence to unbelief as the service of faith. Marvel not, then, at this life-giving power of His word to them that hear, "for all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall go forth; they that have done good, into the resurrection of life," the full accomplishment of the power of His life-giving word. "What is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, which He wrought," etc.; making us "the fulness of," etc.; as so Phil. iii., according to the power, etc. "They that have done evil" (have not walked in the power of the resurrection life in the world by faith), "they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment." The very power they despised shall be exercised as mere power upon them, and shall bring them into the judgment, which He, the same raiser, has authority to exercise, because He is that which they have despised; Him because He was. The recognition of Jesus as from the Father, the Son of Man to have life in Himself as Son of God, is that into which we are quickened by the power of His life-giving word, heard in faith. The distinction of the resurrection of life and of judgment is as complete here as the rejection of Jesus as the life-giving power in unbelief is the occasion why we are not in the one but are subject to the other. They cannot be associated, for the rejection of Jesus is the cause of the other, and that by which its validity is demonstrated as to those who have rejected it. When there is life there cannot be in this sense judgment, or it would be the denial, not the proof, of that power which is *the*

point to be demonstrated; for the judgment is committed to Him as Man. The point to be demonstrated is that He had life *in Himself as Son of God*; while the fitness of the corroboration is wonderful, because it is in that character in which He was rejectable, because He assumed it vivifyingly to others. Blessed be His name! at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.

—30. He here, therefore (as that in which He is manifested and judges), returns again entirely to His human character: "I can from Myself do nothing" (as Son of God He quickened whom He would, yet coincidently with the Father) as Man, in which however He had that life. He was the Servant of the Father; came, not to do His own will, but His that sent Him (see also John xvii. 3). And this was in righteousness. It was a judgment not flowing from Himself, nor vindicating Himself. That He left to the Father. His will had no part in the judgment. Simply as it was presented in truth to Him He judged, without the slightest bias, His will having no part in it, for He sought this in nothing. His judgment was simply the judgment (the now abstract judgment) of God on what presented itself, on what He heard, as the evidence meets the law in the judge's mind. He did this too as a Servant, as a hearer, which is His scriptural character as a Servant ("He hath digged ears for Me"). It was as Man He judged, and this even when it was judgment on Himself (see Isa. l.). Neither *thus* could He bear witness of Himself (though the Son of God being manifested) as Man; for indeed it would essentially deny the very truth of His character as seeking solely the Father's glory, in

which He was faithful as a Servant in the flesh; and therefore we may simply say it would not be true, for He would therein have broken in upon the truth of His character. Yet He was in another sense competent, for He *was* the Son of God, and though Man (and as such would not), yet knew whence He came, and whither He went, which shewed His inherent competency (for as such God alone can give witness of God).

—32. "There is another." Here I believe our Lord secretly refers to God's witness to Him, known to Himself, not that of which He testifies to others (as see chap. viii.) of which reflectively He speaks when He says, "O righteous Father," etc., "but I have known Thee." And again, "If I said, I knew Him not"; and as the Apostle speaks, "Knowing God, or rather known of Him"; only of Him in perfectness of Unity; and hence indeed we may learn the Unity and Divinity of our Lord; for as the Father bore witness so He was able to know its truth (as compare on this very subject 1 John v.). The Lord then turns to that which was applicable responsibly to them: "Ye sent unto John." Not that He received testimony from man, but indeed as elsewhere bore it to John. But these things He said for their sakes, that they might be saved. Nevertheless, though he was the burning and shining light they would not in its season all rejoice in it. So with some doubt I interpret; but see above, and enquire as to this.

Again, the works, and the Father Himself, bear witness of Me; the works of His mission, the Father of Himself; that is, they bear witness of the Man, Him

who was Jesus, that He is the Son of God. Not that they had seen the Father, indeed; but the word which He fully met it was evident they did not receive, for they did not believe on Him who fully answered all that was in it; herein the rejection of that to which the word bears witness is the rejection of the word itself, which note.

This leads the Lord to another reference as to that which they received as witnessing to Him, the Man in whom was life to give. The Scriptures, they were all of Him; but they would not come to Him. Not that He desired glory from them thus coming to Him, or seeing Him witnessed of in the Scriptures; but He knew *them* (though they would not receive Him), that they had not the love of *God* in them. He had come in His Father's name (trying their love to God), and they would not receive Him, His Son. If another came in his own name, associated with human glory, and therefore willing to receive their praises, and make them of value, him they would receive; thus condemning themselves as lovers of themselves, not God. "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another?" "Think not," says our Lord, "that I will accuse you to the Father"; for indeed with the Jews was the great question with God, even the Father, as to the reception of His Son, as it is written, afterwards: "Unto us a Son is born," etc.; and, "I have yet one Son; it may be they will reverence My Son." "Think not," therefore says our Lord, in the consciousness of His Sonship, "that I will accuse you to the Father. Moses, in whom ye trust, will be your accuser; for he wrote of Me." But we

may observe the perfect humility of our Lord (compare Hebrews ii. 1): "How shall ye believe My words?" We may also remark our Lord's testimony to the value of the written testimony over oral as the object of belief in certainty and power.

This then, while addressed to the Jew, took the broad ground of man in principle, as we have seen elsewhere in this Gospel, and took the present testimony as addressed to those amongst whom He was manifested, taking on Him in this even their seed; also, as the object and subject of the testimony, was the life-giving Son, made the Son of *Man*, and as Man Judge of men; and all that all men should honour the Son, in the largeness of the revelation of the Father, even as they honour the Father. Nothing can be more distinct than the position of the whole matter. Moreover, it was the rejection of Jesus as *from the Father* that was the ground of accusation. But they received not honour from God only, and therefore He that was from Him, and had His honour, they could not receive. If one came in his own name, having therefore man's honour, which they recognized and loved, him they would receive. This is a deep, important principle morally, and grows into the corruption of the Church; for God's gifts are the occasion of man's honour; and if this be at all recognized, the spirit, motive, and therefore, necessarily, character of service is lost.

Whenever this came upon our Lord He got out of the way of it. He did not receive testimony from men. It was with the Father He had to do, whose honour He bore. However, He would not accuse them to Him. That

would have been seeking His own honour (at their expense). But it was the reception of Him as bearing His Father's honour that tried their moral character. But that in which they trusted and boasted (being of God) would be their ruin or their accusation; even Moses, for it was his business to bear witness of Jesus; the perpetuation of his testimony was on account of Jesus. But theirs was a hopeless case.

—35. So long as it did not interfere with self-importance, till opposition of heart was drawn out, they were willing to rejoice, and rather please themselves in the light of John. They were willing to rejoice in it, but they were not baptized of him.

Our Lord states testimony of John, of His own works, directly from the Father, from the whole counsels of God in the Scriptures, which they received, and which were witnesses of Him.

—37. Note the means of knowing and coming to God, of the Jews here (if all elsewhere, "No man hath seen," but the only begotten Son, He hath revealed Him). He states they had not seen nor heard God; no direct intercourse with Him of nearer or more distant kind. It was by some means that they should know Him, His word abiding in them, and that word testifying Christ manifested in accordance with the counsels revealed in it, therefore all to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

—39. Then observe, they received them, nay, esteemed them as the words of eternal life. *Humeis* (ye) I conceive to be emphatical (*yourselves* therefore), and this very nearly concludes me to the imperative, which I had

long doubted, but *v.* 40 tends the other way, so as still to hold me in doubt. However, they did not receive their testimony.

Note, the translation is all very well, but the force of *hai marturousai* (which bear witness). It was a question what witnesses Christ had of His Person and mission. John indeed was; though He needed not man's testimony. But not to speak of what was afforded Him, there was witness which they admitted: They are My witnesses.

CHAPTER VI.

As the last chapter of the vivifying power of Christ according to His will was associated, or rather contrasted, with the imbecility of the Law, of the ministration of Angels, so here our Lord, as the substance or instrument of life as received by faith as broken, that is, the life given, the natural life given, and so the food of men, believers, the vital substance of the chapter, is associated with the type of the Paschal Feast. "The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near."

Our Lord departed away beyond the Sea of Galilee, of Tiberias. A multitude followed Him. This was a

sort of link between the Lord's service and the Jewish nation or body generally; but they were not necessarily, properly speaking, Jews, but there were Jews among them. They followed Him, we may observe, because of the signs done upon the sick, but without, as before, really receiving Jesus as come down from heaven, or the Sent One of God. Jesus therefore went up into the mountain, and sat there with His disciples. Upon this, Jesus, lifting up His eyes, and seeing that a great multitude was coming, at once entered on the subject with Philip, the fact of their necessity being developed by the enquiry to Philip, shewing also the familiar exercise of the disciples' mind habitual to the Lord, and His entire interest in them, the case requiring it. For it was customary (and is) with the Lord to meet every need His people are in. It is *His* occasion of miracle. Another in the same confidence in Him tells Him of the five loaves and two small fishes. Minute circumstances are pleasant when connected with things of deep interest, and shewing forth the occasion of the glory of One whose glory is ours.

The Lord then, acting upon the benevolent necessity of supplying their need, proceeds to minister food to all, to make them sit down, and with His disciples serve them, serve them royally indeed, as He says in that day, "Verily I say unto you, He shall make them sit down to meat, and shall gird Himself, and come forth, and serve them." So Melchisedec; for His royalty is service also to His people, and so ever; for place is always service towards those who are in relationship toward us in it. Accordingly our Lord shewed His

royal power of feeding and sustaining His people unlimitedly (for this shall be His portion in gift in that day over the creature, as it is also in Colossians, but not thus). See also Psa. cxxxii. 15, lxviii. 10. So see the time of Solomon's manifestation in the temple when the Feast of Tabernacles was kept; fully then. So of David before (partially); and it was now in power over the creature; for this is His personal inheritance as Son, First-born of every creature; but also exercised in unity of royalty, as not simply over the house of David (though so) but also as Melchisedec, the Priest upon His throne; for as over the house of Judah and Israel it is exercised actually in royalty: "They shall hear Jezreel." They assumed the royalty, though in ignorance, from the inheritance, the sonship over the creature. He was the Prophet like unto Moses. Their minds, however, were simply confined to it after the order and desire of their own will. They would eat of the loaves and fishes. They understood nothing of the redemption power. But it shall be of the blessings of that day: There shall be a heap of corn upon the earth, high upon the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, when men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed; even more than the blessing of Abraham; and all the earth be filled with His glory. Hence the force and character of this miracle.

However, though we have passed on into these associated subjects, the proposed main subject and point here proposed by the Spirit of truth is the sustaining power of Jesus, His sustaining, feeding, life, or sustaining

it by feeding. Upon this they would make Him a King, which led us into the other parts of the subject. This proposal to make Him a King He rejects, and avoids their proposed force (indeed it was only of their carnal will, not indeed in the place or order in which He was in very deed a King). He would not be a King now; though He was indeed a King, and their King.

As the facts of the history (the miracle) are thus instructive, so I think the circumstances of the passage over the sea are so, and connectedly, describing the difficulty and labour and tossing of the disciples, left just at the closing in of troubles, and toiling in the dark a length of way, yet reached not the land. The sea then arose, trouble and storm on the face of the circumstances they were in; it was dark, and Jesus had not come to them. It appears to me that the state of trouble more peculiarly relates to the Jews, and the Remnant in it. He had left the multitude, and refused their royalty, before; and then departing into a mountain Himself alone; that is, not now blessing even the Remnant with His presence; they had to descend on to the sea of this world alone, when it was now late, when darkness was closing in upon all.

In this state simply they are allowed, without any distinct recognition of their intervening condition, to continue, and Jesus rejoins them in the midst of great confusion and trouble, yet right in purpose. He walks in the same evidence of royalty, as in another way before, over all the troubles, unaided by which they were tossed and perplexed, and came near the ship. And they were afraid. They see Him. Here He rejoins them;

here they see Him again walking on the sea, and near the ship; they were amazed and afraid; but it was, on His address to them, a recognized Jesus. He saith to them, It is I; fear not: the same Jesus ye have known before, and now recognize. They were glad then to receive Him into the ship. And then the whole scene closed, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went, but not till Jesus was in the ship rejoining it in the midst of, and walking over, the difficulties and trials they were in; the time of Jacob's trouble; but when they shall be delivered out of it, when a King shall indeed be among them, and the troubled and isolated Remnant, the *yechidim*, find themselves in the rest they could not attain, and that immediately, troubled as they may have been, even as his brethren before Joseph at his approach.

It is the full picture, before the Lord shews the character in which He was to be intermediately received, of the historical dealing with the Remnant, who, as He refused to be King then for the madness of the people, were left alone by Him, to be rejoined when He would bring them to land. It embraces the two epochs when He had to say to the Jewish Remnant: His desertion, so to speak, and rejoining of them, and the consequence. Then comes, connected with the subject, in which the beams of His royalty, or estate as royal, actually shine forth, the development of His intermediate position as rejected, and the true reason and moral force of it. For His royalty was not to be exercised merely in abstract external power over the Jews, lifeless, according to the mere carnal notions of their own will, but to be the

vivifying sustenance as broken [of those] who receive the blessings of that life-giving power with which His royalty was associated, in which, as Head of the creation, He had life to give; because the Son, who was the rightful Heir of all things, was given also to have life in Himself, of which they must be partakers to be associated with Him (and this could not be but by the vital union of grace), and that as broken for redemption, for an unbroken Saviour could be no sent source of grace: "He that eateth Me, even he shall *live* by Me." And in the power which He had thus could they alone have the sure mercies of David, which even rested on His resurrection, as we know. Thus is the full, large link of His royalty (actual over the Jews), connected with the Sonship of inheritance, and associated with the Second Adamship of quickening Spirit, by which the largeness of that character brings into redeeming union by His death, fully closed round and linked together; or rather, the effectual sustenance of redemption, unison in His death, by which any were brought into co-partnership with Him in that glory: "He that eateth Me shall even live by Me." This is a most important association.

In this chapter then is associated the prospective royalty of Christ, in which He would feed the people with plenty in His actual position of blessing, and that in which He becomes the actual *spiritual* food of His people, them that believe on Him unto life eternal, associated with Him in the same life, and this believed in as rejected, broken, and giving forth His life on their account.

Having given the general prospective doctrine

previously, He here opens out that which is properly Christian, so called, belongs to the Kingdom of heaven, in which He was humbled. This flows from His discourse with the people finding Him; they could not account how, or at least when, He came there, on the other side of the sea, from where He had fed them. Our Lord, on their asking it, knowing their real thoughts, at once presents it to them, opening out their practical unbelief, and the character in which He would be manifested, Himself the object of faith, and that as broken and given, and not seen, nor supplying them with the present sustenance of their carnal lives, the life of their hand, that they should not grieve; that they must receive Him in this character, and not from signs of His present power; for He was to be broken as the power of eternal life, having Himself come down from heaven for that purpose. They had seen a sign, but they did not believe, for they sought after the power of sense, and were looking for the fruit for themselves, not for the glory of God. It was presenting the principle of faith as the way of life, and this in the recognition of Jesus as broken and given, as contrasted with any present actual gift to them in their present state (for indeed they were dead), and so the power of life.

—27. Therefore, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto *life eternal*, which the Son of Man" (note the character) "shall give you: for," etc. Here it was only presented generally as the object aimed at, even that which endured unto eternal life, Himself the giver as Son of Man, sealed of God, even the Father; the substitution

of this idea for their thoughts (after the old man) of Messiah, as the way of eternal life, while yet the prospective character of royalty actually blessing below has been held up before us; before that preserved, while this given, in the wisdom of God's counsels.

Son of Man is a most important expression in this mystery or doctrine, for while it affirms nothing as regards the Jew, for as Man He took upon Him the seed of Abraham, it does, on the rejection of the Jew, open the door by the nature, and finds its purpose in that.

They then enquire the works of God. Our Lord's mind then goes a step, and leads them a step further: "This is the work of God"; presents Himself as the object of faith as sent of the Father. They ask a sign, evidently shewing where their hearts were. As our Lord had said, they looked to be fed, to have their present life sustained in ease. God was to be their Servant in this. Thus they were to be marked as His people; while their carnal man would be satisfied, and their pride fed as well. Such is the carnal notion of privilege, as it would specially appear too among them. Compare our Lord's conduct exactly with Satan.

Satisfaction, faith, in the privileges of another, is the form of the sloth of unbelief which the pride of an apostatized religious system assumes. They required (assuming present blessing, and looking for carnal ease in it now), a "sign, that we may see, and believe." Not only does our Lord present the nature and abstract work of this faith which He was proposing to them, but now in progressive contrast with the characters of their

unbelief (for progressive revelation ever develops the deep moral character of unbelief in act) presents the positive, present object of required faith to them, as to which His Father was then dealing with them, the real object of a Jew's faith, and which he must have faith to believe or receive: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses did not give you the heavenly bread," or the bread from heaven; "but My Father *giveth* you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is *He who comes down . . . and gives.*" They look for it there as a present gift, for present gift begets the desire of conscious necessity, and willing to believe its truth, and is the handmaid of faith.

Upon this our Lord at once declares and reveals Himself as the bread of life present. Previously it had been inductive argument; that is, leading their minds on from the natural frame of selfish unbelief to the point of faith; then our Lord presents fully the object of faith present; the rest is simply God's work. Previously it was "said *therefore.*" Now, they having said, "Lord, evermore give us," it was no more "said therefore," but "said"; that is, the Lord presents Himself as the full, present object of faith: "I am the bread of life"; "he that believeth." The "I am" includes His flesh; that is, Him come and then present, to be believed on as come in the flesh, as manifested, the life which was with the Father manifested (compare 1 John i., though that is in another order). He is "the bread of life"; He saith not "life" simply, but the constant sustenance of life, life from God, life from the Father, actually manifested, seen, and tangible.

Observe, further, the fulness of character. He was not merely Messiah, but "out of heaven, and gives life to the world," the bread of God therefore; though "My Father giveth you"; yet having this power of life intrinsically. It is therefore (which note) "he that comes," and "he that believes." It appears to me that there is a difference between the hungering and thirsting, the coming and believing. It appears to me that the coming to Him is as in the flesh, the bread, the coming to Him in this character as come in the flesh; seeing Him, God manifest in flesh. Such shall in nowise hunger. He that believeth on Him receives of His Spirit, and shall never at any time thirst, as He saith. We "have all been made to drink into one Spirit," as we know now, after the Spirit is spoken of as water and drink. It is not that the two things are not associated. We have seen in chap. iv. that they are immediately so associated; but though associated they may be distinct; and the coming of Jesus in the flesh, and the drinking into the Spirit as from Him so come, are alike primary truths of dispensation; for the Spirit is received from Him as having come in the flesh and been humbled, and therefore now exalted; so He gives the Spirit.

There is another propriety in this, and that is, it is as believing in Jesus not present that we receive the Spirit, and thirst not, howsoever it be hence the force of that which He speaks in the end of the chapter; for it is not the flesh, but as dead, which is profitable for us, or its death rather: "For he that has died is justified from sin"; "but the Spirit is life because of righteous-

ness"; and hence it was the Gentiles were let in to the full feeding on Christ; for the enmity was in His flesh (wrongly translated, I think, in the English), and neither so was there justification for the believer (sinner), though there might have been blessing for the righteous; nor could therefore a Gentile be let in but in this, the way of life; He believed on as dead, and a receiving of the Spirit, he could, and a Jew so come to equal privileges; for the Spirit was, as we have seen, through and after death (therefore "believe"); though abstractedly, as we have seen, coming to Him in the flesh they would not hunger. But we have special knowledge of Him as in the flesh, very special; that is, as dead in it, dead unto sin once, and so believing on Him we receive of the Spirit, and never thirst.

It was, however, as we have said, matter of faith to come to Him, even as in the flesh, because He was God manifest in the flesh. Nor could He receive any who did not see the Son. Therefore He says, "But I have said to you, That ye have also seen Me, and do not believe" (compare Thomas afterwards; as Peter, "In whom, though now," *not eporôntes*; so 1 John i. on the other hand; but this applied to Jews). And then comes the full development of this important doctrine, applicable, as we have said, to Jews, but by the principle of faith, not actually *eporôntes*, for we walk by faith, and not by sight, letting him that believeth in, as our Lord's answer to Thomas above, Himself the point of access or approach; for His word would be such as might be directly and fully applied by the Jews on the spot, and yet declare the result in full blessing, into which we are

admitted by faith, but presented as receivable then in Him come in the flesh; for as yet He has not spoken of its breaking, but what He will do for them coming to Him then sent of the Father.

Well, herein then was His consolation: He came to do His Father's will. All that the Father gave Him would come; but He was perfectly subject to His Father's will, came to do it, and therefore would never cast them out. Though the body should reject, all that came He would receive, and not cast out; for He came, not to please Himself, but even in saving to do His Father's will; and He was content to exercise His power within these limits, He doing that by which any were to be saved, He effecting the work, but content to be the Father's Servant in it. Whoever comes to Him He in no wise casts out. This is not only from His own saving office, but because He is content to be subject to His Father's will, and knows that His (given to Him) shall come to Him. Here it is the direct acquiescence in His personal rejection. Having seen Him being humbled in this, also in saving those who did come of the Father's gift (here above all shewing His perfectness as a Servant, for the Son had life in Himself, and could quicken whom He would), He speaks of Himself, as come down, as the Person to come to. Here I first find, moreover, the election of the Father's love (for this Gospel is most *morally* methodical) behind the rejection of Jesus by the body: "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life"; that is, I find it first brought out into operation here as the satisfaction of Christ's soul; so in Matthew xi., end; and here, accord-

ingly, the blessing of this is developed, that of those whom the Father had given Him He should lose none. It would not be left to that nature whose weakness had as such rejected Him, but to the effectual securing in the Son the will of the Father, now to be manifested in blessing of its own authority.

The subsequent passage seems to come in to avoid the preclusion of individuals under the unbelief of the body, or man's will exhibited in them. They might have all been rejected as a body. This saves the opportunity to every individual (to be formed, indeed, into a new body or fold in Him) who *does* see the Son, and believes on Him, of all the blessing that [is] in Christ; for this was the will of Him that sent Him; and he would get the blessing, the full blessing, in due time (in God's way; that is, the Father's way), in spite of the rejection of the body; he has everlasting life, and as a son he shall enjoy the blessings of the Father's Kingdom; that is, as risen from the dead, for this was part of the Father's will.

Hitherto our Lord had only spoken of Himself as come down from heaven, come for blessing; but as the body had seen, and did not believe, blessing in spite of them (for their unbelief had been manifested) for every one who *should* not be included and precluded by their unbelief, who did believe in or come to Him. Not yet had He presented the apparent stumbling-block of His being broken; for, as we have said, unbelief is progressively manifested, and the progressive security to believers of blessing (in spite of the unbelief of those [with whom] they might seem associated), by the progressive de-

velopment of the supremacy of God's ways, still more distances the apathy of unbelief. Here we may remark, in *principle* the letting in of Gentiles is provided for, but not as yet brought to light. But as yet, I say, the Lord has only manifested Himself as the bread come down, and he that came to Him, and drank, say, of His doctrine (for His words were spirit and life) should have everlasting life.

This being done, He proceeds to the blessing of believers, not to save the credit of unbelief by not propounding full and blessed truth; nor does He hesitate, on the distinct rejection of one truth, to make the matter worse to them by propounding further. They had shewn their unbelief: "Is not this the son of Joseph?" They were Socinians; they recognized the natural birth; that is, simply, they did not see that He was the Son of God, that He came down from heaven. He then puts the full principle of their rejection of Him before them: You need not murmur among yourselves; I will tell you the simple truth, says the Lord; ye are reprobate. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Death indeed must be the consequence of all this state of things, but "I will raise him up in the last day"; for our Lord has been all through suggesting death as the consequence, and that which intervenes before blessing, in so repeating the raising up.

We may remark that our Lord, when the body as such has rejected Him (as He says, "I *said* unto you, That ye also have seen Me, and believe not"), as in [the] former chapter, instead of confining Himself to those

things which might not seem to hurt or drive them away, on the contrary boldly produces the things which would, while objects of faith to all, draw out of the body those who had ears to hear; because He came to do His Father's will, and boldly avows the principle that they cannot come to Him unless the Father which had sent Him draw them. And this is a leading moral point in this chapter, for it commenced to be developed, as we have said, in this chapter, and this is the only way of doing the *Father's* will, whatever may please men. The Remnant are preserved by the very character of the words themselves, and their believing necessity: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life," etc.

Further, we may remark that this argument with unbelief draws out a new principle, not merely that those whom the Father gives shall come, but that th[illegible] shall come by the Father's drawing, and tha[illegible] come but by the Father's drawing. [illegible] declaring what was true in gener[illegible] way, has not here passed out of t[illegible] application. "It is written in [illegible] that is, Messiah's people, "s[illegible] Whosoever therefore hath [illegible] the Father, cometh unto [illegible] gone beyond this "con[illegible] receivable simply by [illegible] principles on which h[illegible] But it introduces our [illegible] an association wit[illegible] in character, br[illegible]

place with Him, which enlarged fully the scene of His power, but as ever in the way of entire humiliation and emptying in Him; for indeed thus this chapter is a development of Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8 in its two parts; for "being found in fashion as a Man He humbled Himself." "Not," therefore our Lord says, "that any one hath seen the Father, save He that *is with God*, He hath seen the Father."

This gives Him a character solely of faith, and in which He is life-giving; and then is developed the full unfolding of faith, given "even unto death." The very title of the life, "that Eternal life which was with the Father, and was," etc., being from God, reached hence out over and beyond the dispensation of the Jew; and this could only be by death, in which He therefore became the life-sustaining principle of power to all that [illegible]elieved, and by a principle of faith, therefore letting in [illegible]d so, in point of fact, through His grace; though [illegible]ter of this Gospel, as we have seen), [illegible]ily administered amongst the Jews. [illegible]this verse just shews out the [illegible]l.

[illegible]at the 36th verse is that [illegible]iple of election; but this [illegible]od, and the fact of the [illegible]h it may be first to the [illegible]acy reaching forth to [illegible]postle, etc.; and this [illegible]mans xi.; and this [illegible]hrough death, and [illegible]ransition is very

marked in *vv.* 45-50, from that which is purely Jewish in all its expressions to the power of eternal life in Christ; and we may observe the very language noticed before, "he that comes," "he that believes," with that very character in Him (*v.* 46) which introduced the principle of faith. They are just brought into contrast in *vv.* 48-50: "*Your* fathers did eat," etc., "and died." "This is the bread that descendeth from heaven, in order that any one may eat, and not die." It has life in itself; as indeed our Lord goes on to say: "I am the living bread."

Its coming down from heaven also gave it universality in its originative character and capacity; as in fact on Jewish rejection by death the life which was above all became, as returning to heaven, universal in its actual dispensation, for it resumed its position of universality, while the rejection of the Jews gave it dispensatory righteousness as regarded their claims, for they ceased in the new mercy; and sin being put away, enabled the communication of the indwelling life to all that believed in Him so risen, as the bread that came down from heaven; for Jesus in the millennial glory will not be an object of faith, though present on earth in some sort He was; so, "We believe, and are sure," because the life was revealed in humiliation.

As to the general point see chap. iii. 31. It is, however, still in the vivifying power of life; as made flesh still, though in the power of an endless life; and the power of it consists in the association by faith of the power of the risen life with the death of which we are partakers, planted in the likeness, sin being therein put away, and

we therefore receiving a life free from sin ; for it is the same Jesus which is alive (we being quickened, and feeding on His life), which was crucified, broken, and His life given ; "for he that has died is justified from sin" ; so we, receiving life from Him who died, are "justified from sin," for in that life risen we recognize that He was dead, and we with Him, therefore "justified from sin." He also was justified in the Spirit. Hence our Lord also opens out into the full statement in this verse. Had He not been the living bread there could not have been this association, for there could not have been the identification of a life so passing through death. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; he that eateth of this bread shall live *for ever*" (receives through the death of Christ communion with His resurrection) ; "and the bread which I will give is My *flesh*, which I will give for the life of *the world*" (*v.* 51).

Hereto our Lord has stated the full doctrine. He now goes farther, and, as we have seen Him, progressing continually ; but the Spirit teaches us by it. The Jews had refused Him. He states now (having stated it given for the life of the world) that they, the Jews, must come in on this principle, or they had no life in themselves. How accurate is the language ! Thus the Jews must come in. They, the Jews, now again, after the doctrine specifically introduced, unless they eat, etc., they had no life in themselves (it is not here question of gaining life by the Law, but they have no intrinsic life). "He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself." But he that was joined into Christ's death

should have *everlasting life*, and Christ would raise up even his mortal body, the vessel of death, at the last day, as quickened in person, by His Spirit, feeding on Him, having (derivatively, indeed, but actually) this everlasting life (in which the risen Christ lives). He by His power would bring the body in the same blessing, raise him up at the last day.

The Jew had no life in himself. "He that eats," *as such* had everlasting life, and Christ would raise him up; for the heavenly things would suit the vivified ones of Him made higher than the heavens. For His flesh was food, and His blood drink; for this feeding on Him thus broken, and His life given, was to dwell in Him, and He in one so living on Him; for indeed it is in this fleshliness of Christ that all our communion with the fulness of God rests. And it is all fulness; they are "all of one"; but it is of one dead, and life given from His, and raised up in the power of endless life, and we "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Yet what is the fulness? It pleased (not the Father specifically) that in Him should all fulness dwell, and so in Creation and Redemption towards the Church, and this in intrinsic fulness: "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and so communicable in actual (personally) and comprehensive fulness. "He that ascended is He also that first descended into the lower parts of the earth" (so here), "that He might fill all things," hence our glory; also in fulness of grace and truth giving us communion with the blessedness of God, in character, as what He is.

This also is in Christ; but we enter into it by death

("for all have sinned"). Therefore, "And you hath He reconciled," in the same place referred [to], "who were dead in trespasses and sins; in *the body of His flesh through death*, to present you unblamable and unreprovable in His sight"; the enmity, of course, of Judaism and heathenism being also gone, and "Christ in you, the hope of glory"; for death and sin and the power of Satan were all exercisable in respect of this body of death, and hence Christ, as Heb. ii. and Peter: "Who His own self bare our sins," etc., that in union with Him we might be in a life absolutely freed; for our union with Him was through death, He dying for us, and in association with us. There cannot be a more blessed subject than this, nor one more important fully to understand.

He then that eats the flesh of the Son of Man, and drinks His blood, dwells in Him, and He in him. The Lord opens this out, however, further in its activity; and here I would remark that it is [not] *dia tou*, but *dia ton*, which seems, I think, to convey a further meaning. And you will observe that it is associated with His being sent: "The living Father hath sent Me, and I live on account of the Father." It was not merely an inceptive act of communicated life, but a continual act of communion of life; as He argues, therefore, in another place, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The life is therefore practically also a life abstractedly on account of Him through whom we continually live. As sent, the Lord lived solely and wholly for Him by whom the constant sustenance of His spiritual life, not as from without, but as indwelling, was. So the Apostle in Galatians ii. 19, 20. The life

which lives from Him must live continually for Him; from Him, not simply as giving it apart from Himself, but by effectual union, it being the actings of that very life in us, as it is His life.

There is some difficulty in bringing out to light the identity of two separately considered things; but the force and importance of it is quite different from merely *dia tou* or *emou*, or a given life; it is morally a corporate or aggregate association in all which life is or constitutes life with the source of that life, so as that it all must be *di' auton*. It is the development and exhibition of it; it is just *eme* coming forth.

Our Lord, then, having now divulged the whole truth, reaffirms it in its full character and results. Before, He had said less definitely, "Your fathers," etc.; "eat thereof, and not die"; now, this universal bread, which I have declared is the bread that comes down from heaven; "not as your fathers eat, and died; he that eateth *this* bread shall *live for ever*," leading to the full statement of given or communicated eternal life, freed too from all charge; as the Apostle: "Who shall lay?" etc. "It is Christ that died, yea rather," etc. "Who shall separate?" (Romans viii.) And this sums up the answer to their question in *v.* 31. This was said to Jews, teaching regularly in the synagogue. The absence of the article marks that the order of the testimony, not the fact of the place, was meant to be conveyed; as we should say, He said these things teaching in church. It was addressed to Jews as so assembled, which is important to the intelligence of the previous part, and confirmatory of what has been given here.

—53,54. It is not merely knowing Christ as God in which eternal life is obtained, but it is knowing Him as come in the flesh, including death (in a way which we cannot here develop), which constitutes eternal life, the bread come down from heaven, the basis of the great mystery of godliness: God manifest *in the flesh*, Christ come in the flesh. The third chapter exhibits the operation of the Spirit in renewing the mind, opening the eyes, leading it to see and enter the Kingdom by a new birth, while it also then presents the lifting up upon the cross as the object of saving faith; here the great power of the work of Christ, become the life, having come in the flesh, and died, and so become the intimate source of life to His people, by their actual communion with Him as a quickening Spirit, by faith in His death, of which we may see the explication to us in the Hebrews, as particularly in chap. ii., as to the main truths. So afterwards His re-ascent, as here in *v.* 62.

And we would remark here that, though the Jews murmured, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" it was not at this the disciples said, "This is a hard saying; who can bear it?" but that He was "the bread that came down from heaven"; and accordingly our Lord's answer is, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" and as to its connection with the flesh and blood He says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak," etc.

And, as in chap. iii., it is important to remark also here that it is the flesh and blood of the Son of Man, He as Son of Man: such the whole effect of the Fall, even

death, resulting from the knowledge of good and evil; and that, by suffering those very results, He eat the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil; but only in the fruits of it knowing it, not subject to it, that is, the evil; but actually and absolutely eating the resulting evil. This is the meaning of His flesh and blood, His coming into and meeting the consequences of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and thus directly and comprehensively met in Him. It is not as a quickening Spirit He is here spoken of, but a suffering Man, a Man suffering the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil as the Son of Man. Except we know Him thus we have no life in us, as the resurrection is the seal of this, and His ascension into glory: "What and if ye shall see the *Son of Man* ascend up where He was before?" Note this part.

It is accordingly by faith in His word that we find the quickening (*zôopoiousan*) power of Christ, as come into the world, and dead, and alive again. And note the accordant thoughts of Paul by the same Spirit. "We have all," says he, "been made to drink into one Spirit." The Spirit is the whole portion that we have here; but it is the office of the Spirit to take of the things of Christ, and shew them unto us. Of these things He speaks here; but it is by the Spirit alone revealing them in our hearts they have any quickening power; to wit, by the word, that is, of Christ; but the whole Scriptures testify that it is by this knowledge alone of Christ that there is justification and eternal life.

And we may here note that men are accustomed to speak as if Christ brought them to the Spirit; and it is true it is by faith in Christ that we are made partakers

of the Holy Ghost; but Christ wrought the whole life-giving and perfecting work; and it is the office of the Spirit to do that instrumentally which Christ has wrought effectually, meritoriously; to wit, to separate us out of this world as His possession, as the Scripture speaks, to sanctify us; and, as it is indeed by the manifestation of Christ, so He does indeed by this bring us to Him, and we are made partakers of that which is in Christ; namely, justification, which is of person, not so much of time, for it was wrought in Christ relatively, not in us, unto eternal life.

I am not saying here but that there is a growing conformity to the image of Jesus Christ; but this the Scripture speaks as a command to us. The sanctification of the Spirit it ever speaks of as antecedent to justification, and by which we are brought into Christ, and made partakers of the redemption that is in Him; and it is the corporate name of those who in Christ Jesus, as grafted in, inherit the promises which are true in Him; they are separated out of the world to Christ. I am not saying that there is not an actual, conformable, spiritual assimilation; but I do say, Is this ever spoken of in Scripture as sanctification by the Spirit?

I believe the office of the Spirit has been degraded instead of heightened by this language, and Christ made of none effect. We have heard of being first justified by Christ, and then sanctified by the Spirit. I say, Such is in no instance the language of the Scriptures, and mars the whole plan of the Divine counsels, bringing in inextricable confusion. I know Wesley boasted of discovering this doctrine. I know not was it earlier. Sure I am

the Scriptures abhor it. I hear that "by one offering He hath perfected them that are sanctified," of "the sanctified in Christ Jesus." I say, The work is Christ's from beginning to end; and the Spirit applies it, fulfilling in its operations the purpose for which Christ came into the world. We have not quoted Scripture, for we affirm that the whole of it speaks thus.

Here we find the knowledge of His Person and His death set forth as the power of eternal life, for "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in flesh is of God"; and He came, not by water only, but by water and blood; not by sanctification only, clearing, if it were possible, the purpose only by the knowledge of Him, but by blood cleansing the conscience, and making reconciliation also; the Spirit, ministering these things to us, glorifying Christ, not Himself, but glorified in fulfilling His Kingdom, being His Vicar and Substitute upon earth, speaking that which He hears.

We have spoken of these things but in part, seeing men are dull of hearing, when they ought to be teachers of these things, which are on their behalf; but we trust it will not be so, and indeed we can but speak of them but in part, as things that are known according to our need of them, not the wisdom of God, who sees them all unministered. But God will be all in all, and they are meant to be thus known; and it is our wisdom, when called on, to know how to minister them by the Spirit according to that need, which the perfect God had regard to in them; for we know nothing of ourselves, and have them but as ministers, that God may be all in all. The Lord perfect His people for that day, that they may be

able to enjoy Him as they might through the knowledge of Him in Christ Jesus. The Lord our God hasten it in its day, even our God, that He may dwell amongst them who are able to delight in Him, that God may be all in all.

Note as to those who deprive men of the blood, they take away that which is alone the seal and pledge of the Covenant, and that on which the life-giving power depends, the blood of sprinkling, to which, if they do anything, they should pledge themselves. "We have all been made to drink," says St. Paul, "into one Spirit," and by which the covenant of remission is typified, which they pledge themselves to, they tell us, that inasmuch as the body is really there they do receive the blood. But this only shews their total ignorance of the whole truth and mystery; for it is the body broken, to wit, by death, and the blood shed, and by being shed, which is available to eternal life; and if the blood be still in the body neither can be partaken of at all, for neither have been dealt with so as to fulfil the purpose for which He became flesh at all.

His life was given when He gave His blood, and till He gave it His Church was unredeemed, and the mystery of godliness unfulfilled, and it is the pledge of our being His Church, redeemed by His blood-shedding, in which we join. And yet they would give us His body and blood together, as not broken or shed; assuring us, if anything, that there is no redemption! Such is the deceit of Satan where he gets round by false pretences. What shall we say to this: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone"? And yet we are all mocking our own souls as if we were redeemed,

and yet partaking of the supposed unbroken and unemptied body, the unperfected person, not of Christ nor of any one else. Alas, alas for men! Satan mocks those whom he has under bondage of an old system. There is not a single substantive truth of the Gospel which is not practically and in mockery denied in this changed order.

—60. This had been addressed to the Jews. We have now its effect on His disciples, which opens out very fully, and confirms remarkably, the interpretation given of the previous part. It was the effect of the whole discourse. This view that the Lord gave of Himself as the bread come down from heaven was very hard to receive. Who could hear or receive it? Our Lord then, knowing their questionings, asks them, "What and if ye saw the Son of Man"; He thus present in the flesh, the Son of Man, "ascending up" into the very position (of universality of grace) "where He was before?" the evidence as well as the object exclusively of *faith*, declaring thus the position and character in which He was a Saviour; saw Him, He says, going up; for this is the real, great doctrine with you disciples; you mistake the nature of the dispensation; it is not My bodily presence. "It is the Spirit that quickens"; men must be quickened for eternal life. It is the Spirit does this. My absence, ascended, is the very order of this. "The flesh profits nothing," but "the words that I speak unto you" now have their very power and value in this; it is not even now My bodily presence, but the reception of My words. My words speak life, for they are of the Spirit. "The words that I speak unto you," this is the point of present reception,

"are spirit and life." It is in this character you must come to Me now; "but there are some of you who," though they seem to have come unto Me, "do not believe" (and here we see the importance of the distinction and observation, that it was in some sort by faith, previously made); for thus it is really you must come to Me even now. Any other coming to Me is quite futile. Real coming is on the same principle as when I shall be ascended up, the subject merely of faith by the Spirit.

For they must believe that He really was the Son of God, the living God, and in His character as Man from heaven, really to come to Him; and this was faith. "For Jesus" (nor was He willing, save in the special instance and case, that they should continue with Him) "knew" who believed[not]; and therefore our Lord said that none could come to Him except it were given him of His Father; because it included really coming to Him in this spiritual apprehension of what He was, which was the gift of the Father alone. They might, as here, come actually and carnally; but coming to Him even here, as manifested in the flesh, they must come to Him in reality, as containing within Himself the personal power of that glory which was to be manifested to faith when He was exalted, as see chap. i. 14, or they would come to Him only carnally and falsely, and in denial of Him (therefore our Lord thus far revealed it, that He might have none but real followers); that is, the principles in offence which were the food in glory; so that none (it being really spiritual) could come except the Father gave it to him; for it was His gift to shew the Son's glory (as our Lord to Peter). This is an important comment on the whole

thing (that is, *vv.* 60-65). Accordingly, many of His disciples shewed they had not received this or Him (as remarked), and departed on the statement of what He was, and walked no more with Him.

—67. Equally important also is the confession thereupon of the Twelve, which stands as the representation of the then real confession containing in embryo the living faith, being the gift of God. The Lord said therefore to the Twelve, Do you also wish to go (or will to go)? Simon Peter then shewed that the principle of this very hope, which our Lord had been speaking of, was in them: Lord, to whom shall we depart (or go away)? There was a known object of quickened faith to which they had respect. The rest might be offended (He not meeting their fleshly apprehensions), and turn; for they had no necessity of eternal life by faith. The Apostles from God had, given them of God; therefore drawn to Christ: "Thou hast the words of eternal life."

It was not merely Messiah in the flesh satisfying fleshly desires, but eternal life; for the emphasis is on the *words of eternal life*. Further, it was, as we have seen before, in His words. It was faith, and quickened moral desires. He spake of God; consequently they believed and were sure that He was the Christ, the Holy One of God. This was the approach of their faith to Him; it was in His eternal and missionary character: "Thou hast the words," etc. And observe, it was by the words, not the miracles; it was not asking a sign; and such is real faith, though the miracles may increase the condemnation; as, "If ye believe not Me, believe the works"; "If I had not done amongst them," etc. We

have seen the faith in the others rejected (close of chap. ii.); this received and recognized, and the looking for a sign associated with the rejection of the words. Peter answered on the principle of common faith. Our Lord was able to distinguish in the profession.

This is a most important chapter. It is remarkable how these chapters of John contain progressive phenomena, so to speak, of the Lord. It is also most blessed, for as it brings down into the utmost intimacy of communion, so it leads us up (being by faith, in spirit, which is what is opened out here) into the full association with the glory and place into which He has passed through death. And, moreover, it associates us (while in the fellowship of His sufferings) so in the life which has passed through death, death for us, and emerged, as free from sin, into the glory of that life which was with the Father, and taking us up in this sin-free and glorified life into union with Himself; yet not simply, but as having passed through death, and even His life given in the perfectness of His and the Father's love, into which, therefore, as well as the sin-free life, we are associated. But I rather seek to find the sense to interpret than draw conclusions from, or speak upon here. The power of the chapter is very remarkable.

Verses 30 and 36 seem contrasted. We have noted the development of the electing principle upon the assertion of general unbelief previously. He had spoken of Himself as the bread of life, that in which He was presented as a present object of reception, although, as He afterwards shews, this required the drawing of the

Father and faith, and therefore none but the elect would so really come; but therefore (for which I now further note this) after saying that all that the Father gave Him, etc., and that this was the will of Him that sent Him, that of all that He had given Him He should lose nothing, but should raise it up in the last day (for the gift was eternal life, and the body was vivified), and this, etc., that whosoever *seeth the Son*, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; which is just, as we have seen, the discerning point, confirming the view given of the chapter. So accordingly in Matt. xvi. 16, 17, to Peter. It is the Kingdom of His dear Son.

It is evident, from a comparison of the Old Testament with John vi., what an amazing position of communion we are placed in. The fat and the blood were God's bread (food, see Lev. iii. 11); *lechem* (bread) Lev. xxi. 6, 22; Numbers xxviii. 2; Ezekiel xliv. 7; Malachi i. 7, 12. Ezekiel shows the fat and the blood to have been God's bread. Now, this true bread comes down from heaven; but, while a living Christ was God's delight, and ours, still we could not really feed upon it until it was offered in respect of sin, and not merely its own savour to God. Hence it was flesh and blood; and this (which was death) so that God could feed upon it as most perfectly and blessedly glorifying Him (the Son's love accomplishing it). So we now feed upon that, eat forbidden food, even blood; and life, or rather death, is ours, and our life. God had been perfectly honoured

in these wages of sin. Life in Man has been voluntarily given, and death thus been salvation and the power of life; and we feed upon it; before, impossible and forbidden; now, as impossible to have life or be saved without; so it is our blessed food of God; we eat the true bread of God. We have no life in us; we live by the given life of Christ; but this is the bread of God, the food of His offering made by fire unto Him.

Though through death it is brought forth to the world, verses 53, 54 yet historically refer specially to the Jewish nation.

Note, in John v., where the Son of God is spoken of, we have, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on *Him that sent Me*, hath everlasting life." In vi., where the Son of Man is spoken of, it is, "Every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto *Me*"; "He that believeth on *Me* hath everlasting life." Christ's voice as Son makes us know the Father for eternal life. The Father's teaching makes us believe on the Son of Man, come to Jesus, to have eternal life. It is clear the general truth of v. is the operation of Christ in power as Son of God, though the effect is to believe on the Father; whereas in vi. Christ is the object as Son of Man. Yet, in all cases in John, Christ is looked at as down here, a Person known in the world in flesh. But in vi. the Father draws to Christ in His humiliation.

In the v. and vi. of John it is to be remarked that v., giving the sovereign action of Christ in giving life, we get man's responsibility in the last part of the chapter: "The Son quickeneth whom He will"; "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." In the vi. it is man's part (though by grace): "He that eateth Me shall live by Me." Here, hence, the necessity and sovereignty of grace is brought out: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him."

Note, as we have seen in Numbers, the connection of the shewbread and table with the display of glory in the world, and then the twelve loaves (as the Twelve will be on thrones, and thus Jewish). In John vi. the bread is the heavenly Man; it is the one bread (not the Church, though, note that, but Christ alone), and brings out the spiritual, Divine character in which we know Him as associated with the Father, living by Him, God's bread; and then dying, so as to judge all nature, and be life by death; so for the world; therefore to give life, and raise (whoever believes) at the last day. It is not royal glory (He refused it then), but Divine, spiritual excellency (which is glory); and this as come down into the world. But then man could not eat unless he came in (Jew and all), as a lost sinner by death, and fed in grace on His flesh, and drank His blood. And this is indeed the heavenly Man, but the Man come down from heaven, the seal on whose perfect ex-

cellency is set in His going up to the place suited to it, and where He was before; only as Son of Man. He had a suited title to it in that which He had proved Himself here. All this gives us, not Kingdom glory, but what He is with the Father, yet as Son of Man, so as to take us up in grace by the way. The one loaf is better than twelve.

CHAPTER VII.

After this conversation or doctrine in Capernaum Jesus went about Galilee, for He would not Judæa, because the Jews sought to kill Him. This goes on from chap. v., the last time He was in Jerusalem (which compare); but the Feast of Tabernacles was near. The note below * gives the general view of this; but there are many things else we must note. There are three divisions in this subject or chapter:

First, the typical facts as to His going up to the Feast of Tabernacles;

Secondly, our Lord's instruction during the feast, and,

Thirdly, His proclamation on the last day of the feast.

* This refers to the remarks on page 145.—[Ed.].

The point of the chapter here proposed by His brethren after the flesh was the publicity of our Lord's manifestation: "himself seeks to be known in public . . . Manifest Thyself to the world."

The Tabernacles was the type of the manifestation of the Lord to the world, the gathering in of the saints to His resurrection glory, and the Jewish rest. Hence the force of this passage. Jesus went not up to it, therefore, to keep it in its fulness, though in duty afterwards He went up. *His* time was not yet full come. He states afterwards what was to be expected, as now in respect of this; that is, the Spirit who was to shew the things to come. Now, I look on that eighth day, the day of solemn assembly, as typical of the first day, the glory of the Lord's resurrection; as the seventh of the Jewish millennial rest. The Spirit was to be sent from the risen (and glorified) Saviour, the witness of this state of the saints, their portion in that day. He manifests Himself to us now as He does not to the world.

In this there are two points: His going to Judæa, the manifestation of His presence, *then* "in public," that His disciples might see His works; the other, if He did these things, to shew Himself *to the world*, and the expectation of this as shewing the unbelief of His natural brethren (the Jews). Our Lord's answer to this was not that He would not do so, but that His time (for manifestation to the world) was not yet full come. Their time for passing through and putting themselves forward in it was always ready. The world could not hate them, for they were of it. It hated Him because

He testified of it that its works were evil. "Go ye up." He would not go up to the feast, for His time was not yet fulfilled, and He abode in Galilee.

—10. I am not sure also whether it does not imply also the expectation of the Jews of the ingathering, and their going up, as if it was come, to the feast (and being, but not Christ's, in it), before Christ joined them there, and the worldly and unbelieving character in which they will go up in this expectation, He waiting His Father's full time. The expectation of Him, however, was fully raised among them, and they sought Him at the feast, but with the usual uncertainty and doubtings of unbelief. But this was in the not determined multitude; the Jews, properly, were determined in their opposition to owning Him as the Messiah. Such, I believe, will be the result also in that day, but a bringing into its full, final development what there was at work with Jesus amongst them.

There is also a marked distinction, I think, between the multitude and the Jews, though involved in the ruin of the latter by not coming out from them to Christ. What our Lord was blamed for not doing was making Himself known openly. But He could not do this. He spoke openly, but He could not make Himself known openly, for He was a moral Saviour. He spoke so, and therefore the world hated Him. If He had manifested Himself, it must have been in judgment. But He did speak quite openly, and thus manifested Himself, being content to glorify the Father, let His own glory be hidden, give effectual testimony, saving, or condemning by the responsibility of man, in the full witness

of the Father's glory. They indeed, that is, the multitude, did not dare speak openly; but Jesus did. He did not conceal His righteousness and truth in the great congregation. He had not refrained His lips, and that God, even His Father, knew. The great congregation is always the nation, as such, of the Jews.

This was the way in which He had manifested, not Himself, but His Father and the truth. Nevertheless, He did not fail here to declare Himself, shewing also that, when He did, only the full hatred of the world, of Satan, was brought out against Him. He came to bear witness to the truth, and avowed Himself to be the Son of God; whereupon, because He told them the truth, they would not believe. He must be received by faith, and morally, or the whole nature and order of the Kingdom would be set aside, which was founded upon the necessity of God. Therefore He shewed not Himself to gratify the flesh, but glorified His Father, and presented the truth, which could be received by the Spirit.

The next division which we have, therefore, of this subject is the then teaching of Jesus, instead of His shewing Himself at the feast (as future); for His time was not yet full come. Our Lord accordingly rests it on the principles we have been stating. Jesus taught; the Jews wondered, as it is written. These wilful, blind ones yet recognized the guilt of their unbelief in seeing that He had instruction which He could never have learned (so of the disciples before the council). Our Lord at once assists them, and confesses the source of His teaching: "My doctrine is not Mine," there-

fore has nothing to do with My learning, "but His that sent Me" (My teaching therefore must have been Divine in its nature). But the critical point lies here: If there be willingness to do the will of God, as such, such *shall* know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or I speak from Myself. Here also He affirmed His mission. But their moral state was the real thing in question. Hence the importance of so sending Messiah.

But there was a distinct and sure moral evidence on this point: he that spoke from himself sought his own glory. This point in our Lord was illustriously brought up to us here in this very teaching, as we have seen, refusing (though indeed He was all that could be claimed) to go up to the feast, and shew Himself to the world. Yet so indeed He obtained and shewed far higher moral glory for the truth of God and His own glory. On the other hand, if He sought only His glory that sent Him, as it was plain He did, and did now, ascribing to Him all the glory even of His words, in which He was faithful (in which yet again He had yet more and Divine glory around Him even as a Teacher) then it was plain that He was true, and there was no unrighteousness in Him. Why not receive His instructions? Here, I say, was the full, condemning (though unwillingly so) moral test.

But indeed He could go yet further. It was not merely their rejection of His words, which were manifestly the teaching of God: "Did not Moses give you the law, and not one of all of you keeps the law?" And this was shewn in their dealings with Him: "Why go ye about to kill Me?"

This was addressed to the Jews. The multitude, not privy to their evil, said, "Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill Thee?" Where the truth is not received the very ignorance of the multitude of the wickedness of their rulers plunges them only deeper in their rejection and distraction as to Him who charges this wickedness upon them. How large is the labyrinth turned round the unbeliever! how simple the clue, when once it is had, by which we pass through it! Note the fact in many ways, also the careful distinction the Scripture keeps up all through between the wilfully blind Jews and the multitude, who yet *as so walking* perished in their unbelief.

—21. I refer this to the pool of Bethesda. It is manifest that our Lord did rarely, or not at all, miracles at Jerusalem, and these bringing their judgment of Himself to a crisis. Hence also the words of His brethren.

"Jesus answered, and said to them"; generally now, and explanatory, so as, continuing the general bearing of His discourse, He should bring them all in, they not having wished to kill Him: "I have done one work, and ye *all* marvel." In this state they perished, as it is written, as before, now including all, and His works as well as words: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days," etc. "Moses" (to him they looked) "gave you circumcision, not from himself but from the fathers; and ye circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If therefore a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath, that Moses' law" (on this they rested, not the promises or covenant in it), "be not broken, are ye angry with Me because I have made the whole man

sound on the Sabbath? Judge not according to sight, but judge righteously," about these things.

This, observe, is to the multitude, consequent on their remark as to seeking His death, from which the Jews seemed to have shrunk back, knowing its truth, but having the ignorance of the multitude as their defence with them, Satan willingly using this with them; to which our Lord therefore applies Himself in this way to meet their thoughts and reach their consciences. I know not that to the Jews He says, "Judge righteous judgment."

Upon His thus addressing the multitude some of the Jerusalemites, not of the body of the Jews as rulers, but who being such knew what they were about, said, "Is not this He whom they seek to kill?" (verifying and justifying all our Lord's knowledge of their thoughts and conscience against Him), "and, lo, He speaketh boldly."

To this, His special part, they also bear witness, and they say nothing to Him. It is evident, I think, from this, they (the Jews) had shrunk from the former charge. "Have the rulers really recognized Him to be the Christ?"

The position into which the first charge of our Lord had thrown the Jews gave occasion to this. How various are the shades and forms of unbelief! This drew out the action of the Jews in the authority they possessed, though they could not meet His charges. It drew out the full testimony of our Lord in connection with those, and their state of mind who made the enquiry. The point of their difficulty upon His speaking

boldly without the rulers venturing to speak to Him was that they knew whence He was, though they discussed the point afterwards. Our Lord takes it up, and proposes hereon in all boldness to them, thus led to enquiry, the great, eternal and all-important truth to which His testimony was required and all its truth hung. These remarks, however, were not addressed to Him, and His testimony was a public announcement, and not an answer to them, but it was as it regards us therefore.

Our Lord, in this portion of this chapter (where He places testimony in the place of His manifestation, as at the Feast of Tabernacles; that is, making it matter of faith, so as that they should know the Father, by which, being critical and so separative, yet of the full blessing to those who received it, as see before, chap. i.; in truth, that portion contains the subject of John's Gospel), has given us two important but closely identified testimonies: *whence* His testimony was, and *whence* He was; the import of which, as bringing it to the crisis, we have noticed is manifest; that is, receiving Him so as to receive the Father in a way which included moral apprehension, and so indeed gave, or was the order of, everlasting fellowship with the Father and the *Son*; for so receiving Him by faith they received Him (compare again John i.), and were born (again), and children of God.

Our Lord here charges them with indeed knowing Him, and whence He was; for indeed our unbelief is always of that which we know, and of which the evidence is before us. The veil is not on the glory, but on the heart, as elsewhere: "If, etc.; but now have they both

seen and hated," etc. (chap. xv. 24); and so they proved immediately after (*v.* 30). But there was no reception of the Father in this knowledge. They had full evidence of who He was, but they knew Him only after the flesh; and indeed He had not come of Himself. But He that sent Him, (for now He came in mission and testimony) is true in testimony in the words which He declared by Jesus, and in the judgment which necessarily followed, for the words were the revelation of Himself in and by Jesus to men.

It is knowing the Father by Jesus which is alone the full evidence of saving faith, and the resting-place of the soul. Men may know Him, and whence He is; but unless they know Him as sent, unless by Him they know the true Father, they are strangers to eternal life, and come under judgment. It is not knowing what Jesus is intrinsically, but knowing Him as sent of the Father, knowing Him as Man, and so knowing Him as the Son, that saves: "Who by Him do believe in God, who," etc. (1 Peter i. 21). It was in this character that Jesus acted, that Jesus presented Himself. "I know Him, that I am from Him, and He hath sent Me" (*v.* 29). How the unbelief was drawn out into light and action! The believers may believe that Jesus is a Man, or rather know it. Men may recognize that this Jesus came from heaven; nay, they may believe in the Trinity, that is, own it; but unless they know Jesus as the Son of the Father, as God indeed from everlasting, and one with the Father, but also as Son, they are set in no position, no saving fellowship, which is only with the Father and the Son. "This is the record," "and he that

hath the Son hath life." "The Father sent the Son," and Jesus was the Son, and we believe in Jesus by the Spirit, even in the Son of God, and therefore have fellowship with the Father and the Son, knowing whom is eternal life; that is, the Father, and Jesus Christ whom *He has sent.*

Hence as a Man His very faithfulness, His truth, was in this that which was vital to us. "I know Him, that I am from Him, and He hath sent Me"; and as this was truth in Him; the knowledge of this is eternal life with us. The acknowledgment of this truth was faithfulness, was the truth in Him. It is eternal life in us, knowing the Father and Him.

It is in all this fully recognized that Jesus will be manifested at the great feast, even the Feast of Tabernacles. It was in the confession of this His faithfulness was shewn, when He was seeking, not His own glory, as He could not justly as a Man, but His Father's; but He will then come in His Father's glory and His own, which was now hidden, being come as a Servant. But the point at present was the truth, whether of the Father or Himself, but now as the great point to which indeed His truth was affixed. That He did not speak of Himself the truth of the Father, the 29th verse is, we have said, the great confession, which constituted the truth in Him, as the Father was the crown of all. It was felt they sought to kill, for he [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning. Because He told them the truth, this was the great secret. And this *was* the truth, the victorious truth, which through grace overcame; for truth alone, without grace, would have been no salvation, but rather

brought us more entirely under the power of Satan, or made us as enemies. Grace with truth overcomes, and is salvation.

Some, probably Jerusalemites, sought to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come. They shewed their mind, but God also shewed His. He was true. How marvellous to behold the Lord thus confessing the truth, the Slave of all evil, but waiting upon God who delivered Him from all; as He saith also: "I have not refrained My lips, O Lord, Thou knowest: I have not hid," etc. So was He doing here. But many of the multitude (still thus distinguished, nor was our Lord's reproach thus without fruit, though He might, seemed to, have laboured in vain, and spent His strength for nought and in vain), many of the multitude believed with this stunning rebuke to the Pharisees, though of doubting faith in them: "Will Christ do more works?" in a word, on the works which His Father had given Him to do; as He says, "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did," etc.

But there were those whose character now developed itself, who dreaded to lose their influence, if Christ were received. The Pharisees sent officers to take Him. It was but the occasion to our Lord to bring out another great truth of His doctrine: His being hidden, being rejected as what He was; until the great feast really came; thus completing as to Himself the mystery which was involved in His not as yet being manifested to the world. He had come to them, manifested and taught who He was, and they would not receive Him. But they should seek Him in earnest soon, and find Him not; nor

could they come where He was. Nothing could savour more, on the one hand, of rest to the Lord, but, on the other, of deep and solemn judgment to them, than this solemn word of the Lord's. All the bearings of its deep, judicial truth-telling are perfect and consummate. Christ was to be hid, hid in God (see Col. iii.) till the time of the restoration, the true Feast of Tabernacles; He was to be with the Father, sitting there till, etc.

Strange the pride and confidence of man! Where shall He go, that we shall not find Him? Will He go and teach? etc. But their thoughts in vain sought to reach this, for they knew Him no otherwise than as One teaching the people, and thus they had listened. It is remarkable, this reference to the Greeks (in this as hiding Him, as it was indeed associated with His being hid), these distant, despised, worthless Gentiles. The truth is, pride is destitute of grace. They were silenced here. It was evidently something beyond them.

Here closed the doctrine in connection with our Lord's Person on this subject, and He proceeds to teach that which would be the substituted Comforter, but the Earnest during this His absence, and hiding of His glory, and of it as in that last great day; that is, in the heavenly glory.

We must remark here that to the Feast of Tabernacles alone there was an eighth day, the day of restraint or solemn assembly, including typically (as it appears to me) the great celebration of the universal ingathering; and as the seven days shewed the completion of God's temporal purposes, so the eighth or first shewed the inlet to the eternal purposes, the bringing into, while it passed

beyond, the temporal estate, the glory of that which was without it, the gathering into one in Christ risen and ascended, the resurrection glory herein in faith. It was upon the resurrection day, and the Lord's Day is the resurrection day; for indeed the resurrection is the great link between both; that is, the heavenly and the temporal or earthly. The last day of the feast was then the great and distinctive type of that which is to be gathered together on the appearing of the Lord Jesus, then no longer hid in God, but manifested in all glory and that in a way specifically breaking forth and having its place in, and character from, the heavenly glory; for it was without the week.

Hence in the meantime the Spirit was the witness of all this, coming (though obtained by Jesus as having fulfilled all righteousness and been humbled, which it therefore marks as the way to glory also, that He might fill all things) from Him ascended; or as here, referring to the earthly estate, hid. Hence our Lord (who could not now be manifested as at the Feast of Tabernacles, which He had developed as to all the other, the working, days, the perfect doing of the Father's will, and as to the rest that He was hid in it, and it from them), on the last day, that great day of the feast, promulgates the intermediate and substituting power of the Spirit, Witness and Earnest of His re-appearance.

Our Lord, however, uses language which, while it admits present coming to Him for the purpose (it is to be observed, however, that in speaking of drinking He refers only to the Spirit; He was now rejected as presenting the truth generally), yet in its full application goes

forth into the general estate, truth, of faith in Him. He "stood and cried." This was His now great proclamation, this was the great thing for the world, the position in which it was to be set, and to which He now invited those that thirsted then: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink, he" (then He gives the great proposition) "that believeth on Me, ... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The quotation from the Scripture here does not, it appears to me, refer to any one specific text so apparently stated, but shews the Christian meaning and power of that which we might otherwise pass over. There is a mind of God all through the Scriptures, of which the dispensations of God themselves are but the expression. This is true of this sentence also, and of chap. iv. before. I believe such scriptures as Prov. xviii. 4, Prov. x. 11, are moral truths, which find their real fulfilment here, just as the waters of Ezekiel's temple are exact illustrations according to their own character. Our Lord means, I am the fulfilment of that of God's mind which the Scripture reveals as a general moral truth, according to the order which God has constituted; which is moral, and to us essential truth. I the rather refer to the Proverbs, though not exclusively, in this, as the statements more distinctively of the *logos* and wisdom are there brought forward, and the depth of purpose in this is exhibited in chap. viii.; and of this John is the great Evangelist, in our Lord, that is, as in Person and its direct connection, not merely in its practical shewing forth to the world.

Though proposed, therefore, as coming to Him, it is

developed there as in His absence in the power of the Spirit in him, but in blessing. There is a difference too, I conceive, between the well of water springing up into everlasting life and these rivers flowing out. There it was the indwelling power simply as the power of life, everlasting life, and associated of course with the full blessing there, that is, in everlasting things, in which that life would find its development and scope. But here it is as flowing forth from the man who believes in Jesus. That was in him a well of water. Nevertheless it is not unassociated with the man ; it shall be a fountain of fulness in him.

I think also, as we have seen our Lord here presenting His doctrine (which was however spirit and life) instead of His Person, and now giving this, drank in from Him, instead of His presence, until or as not yet manifested in the feast, the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles. It is as the witness of the heavenly glory cognizant in His fulness ; at least of the glory of that day, the streams of that in the Spirit which go forth from him who believes in Jesus, now the exalted Heir of that glory, and has his belly filled with that by faith ; that is, in spirit it is as the receptacle of the heavenly food when it was digested and understood, and brought into the communicating, intelligent supply of the whole man. So the roll was bitter in his belly ; and this confirms the view elsewhere taken of the river out of the dragon's mouth to be the heresies, false doctrine, not from his belly (for it [had] nothing to do with his own reception of it), but from his mouth, that others might be carried away by it (*potamophoreetoi*).

Hence, then, I think that this is the full development of all that full reception of Christ (embracing all He is shewn to be by the resurrection and ascension) which is by faith, its going forth out of the belly; but it was in the personal power of the indwelling Spirit, the Spirit received; but specially, as we have said, in apprehension of the heavenly (or rather *epouranial*) glory, and future but true state. Yet having the Spirit Himself ever fresh and flowing, the full connection of these things is manifest from the comment given us by the Apostle: "But this spake He concerning the Spirit, which they were about" (it was after His resurrection and ascension, though allowing of coming to Him then, and it was as believing on Him so gone, risen and ascended) "to receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet, *because* Jesus was not yet glorified."

It was then the effectual witness, and had its existence only in the world, in respect of the glory into which Jesus was ascended, which is the truth and source of that in the which He will be revealed; for it was not as in chap. iv. (here as looking up from us to eternal life given so), but come the witness of the glory which belonged to the body in Jesus now ascended as their Forerunner. It was not so much as given (as in the man for his eternal life), but as sent into the world, because of and for Jesus and the Church's glory, and because the glory was accomplished; and flowing forth the witness of this. We say these things that they may be understood; for surely it is the same Spirit, but it is rather as acting than as existing that is here spoken of as in the Church than in the man, though by men perhaps as depositaries of it;

but so mainly as vessels of occasion and use, though yet with understanding withal; for it is "out of his belly shall flow." When I say "understanding," the things of the Spirit can be understood by the Spirit. But such is the force of this passage in the main. There are many deep and blessed doctrines too connected with it, but they are not directly stated.

There cannot be a more important statement than "the Holy Spirit was not yet," and the reason given more inductive to the apprehension of the dispensation to which we are here introduced. There is a point unnoticed here, much confirming the tenor of this note: as until the entry into Canaan they drank of the stream which flowed out of the rock, so now, until that day, out of *their belly* who believe in Him should flow rivers of living water. The force of the expression is exceedingly enhanced, too, by this connection or consideration, the application of which is easy if the foregoing be understood.

Also, note, the sixth chapter is the manner in which, during the absence of Christ, till He feeds with present blessing as towards the Jew and the earth, He feeds by death; the soul, as conscious of sin here, even eating His flesh and drinking His blood; knowing that in death He has met the evil, and therefore through faith baptized with Him into it. This seventh shews the manner in which (during the absence of Christ, till He appears in the fulness of first or eighth day glory), the Spirit is given as towards that glory. The realization of the glory is beyond death, and necessitates death here. But as one respects death to what Christ has left behind, so the other the realization of glory beyond death in which Jesus lives,

or rather will be manifested, for He is now individually on His Father's throne. One is death in the flesh, the other life in the Spirit, prospective of glory. One refers to Christ dying as regards the one, the other as living as the Communicator of the Spirit, the Witness of His glory. Also in verse 37 we have the confirmation of the difference of coming to Jesus present and believing on Him absent : " If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." He could drink then from Jesus, in whom and [in] whose words were the fulness of the Spirit. Then comes absolutely the dispensation of faith : " He that believeth on Me, out of *his* belly shall flow." It was not merely drinking of Jesus, but the rivers shall flow from himself, he believing or receiving from Jesus glorified. It was true it required the same teaching of God really to believe who Jesus was then as when in glory ; and therefore he who believed then would be filled with the Spirit when Jesus was in glory. So that there was moral identity. Still it belonged properly to the dispensation of faith, which is systematically in a glorified Jesus, as it is the witness of that glory from which Jesus sends the Spirit. The passage therefore [in *v.* 39] is strictly accurate, *hou emellon lambanein hoi pisteuontes*, not *hou hoi mellontes pisteuein.* Yet it was given in the dispensation of faith as belonging to that, Jesus glorified being the object of faith, and therefore believers in that dispensation.

—40. We have then, as the full, and clear, and sure declaration and development of the dispensation and order of God, with some conviction of the truth of His character, all the various uncertainty, reasonings, and imbecility of unbelief. The 42nd verse is [as] remarkable

as inconsistent; that is, as negativing the pride of the unbelief before. But through all this we may remark, though He seemed to labour in vain, in the distinctness of His statements of the truth the heirs of glory were called out (now perhaps unseen) to be His companions in the truth of that glory which they had received, and by which they had been regenerated in the truth of His unbelieved word. Now He should see of the travail of His soul, when in love He had suffered in the flesh. But for the full accomplishment of His glory He must make His soul an offering for sin. But the effect of the power of Satan in governing by the heads of religious institutions is very marked. On all else there was influence, not on them; yet the Lord provides, in the midst of all this, the instruments of His hand, not by the power, the arrangements, of man, but His own; in the right place, in the right time, baffling the very malice and consultations of the enemy. Oh! if we had faith to walk simply in the way of faith, the way of His will.

Observe, too, the character of the frustration of their thoughts. "This people, that knoweth not the law, are accursed." But what arrests them? "Does our law judge any man before it hear him?" etc. And what is this timidity of Nicodemus? Sheltering himself under the plea of their law, thus taking out of their mouth their complaint of the people as ignorant of the Law, and throwing the breach of it on them if they pursued their purpose. Oh! if we had faith to trust God; but if we are not willing to suffer in the flesh we never shall.

We have also to remark the reference to authority,

as contrasted with the influence and reception of truth. It was not simply this, however, for they were found guilty against the authority of their own system, as it proceeded from God, and thus a full test was afforded. One Nicodemus (nor many) does not alter the character of the body in act, nor of course of the truth of the principle. But why do I proceed? It was over these things Jesus wept. What ought our thoughts to be? Yet the Lord was not undecided. Where was He not perfect? Though the perfectness of goodness in the midst of evil and in the weakness of man, yet the unfailing Witness for and of God in every circumstance, and in no weakness of conduct of circumstances or of defect.

—52. Again the wanton ignorance of facts disgraced the sincerity of their enquiry.

CHAPTER VIII.

In the close of the former chapter the Law had been bandied about in a vague and desultory way as the occasion of pride or the means of (perhaps just) excuse. But here it is taken up in its full moral character, and Christ proposed in lieu thereof, yet not as disannulling

but indeed confirming it, and that as the Light, so that, etc., and so as declaring the truth *and* exhibiting the Father, and the effects of receiving Him. So this was a most important development as regards the Jews, and shews to what a length the progressive contrast of His light and their darkness had gone; for in proportion as Christ reveals truth to us so does the light of Him, and consequently the darkness that opposed Him, and its character as discovered and brought to light by that light, come forth into distinctness of relief; that is, Himself as the Truth, and it must be also the only chance, to speak after the manner of men.

After the rejection of one truth is the bringing out some further light of truth; but when the eyes are indeed closed this only shews more clearly the deadly and now hopeless state of the alienation and evil. None but must remark how much more brought into opposition, how much more distinctly denunciatory, how progressively characteristic of light and darkness, and their full characters, the conversation of our Lord; because, as here brought before us, our Lord begins with the silent and unobtrusive but fully gracious character of His mission; and here, with continual developments of opposition, He comes to speak of them in the full terms of denouncement which the character of that opposition called for in faithfulness, the solemn and awful denouncement of the Lord of glory: "Ye are of your father the devil." The full development of the character in which our Lord stood is equally clear, and progressively, of course, inapprehensible by them on the feasts; that of our Lord which answered in His

glory or humiliation, the spiritual sustenance of communion, or the outflowing operations of the Holy Spirit, which were meanwhile and until (even in His absence) the return of the Lord, and in view of the present continuance of His bodily presence, or the Jews' reception of Him therein; and by the circumstances more especially, and the part of the position in which He stood as regarded the Law, on the question of life-giving (as before), and so of judgment, and is inapplicable to those already sick through sin. Here the Law is brought forward in a fuller light as standing far above that (practically that) in which they made their boast, but in and by which, spiritually and morally looked at, they could not stand a moment.

The opening is simply affecting: "Every man went to his own house"; none of them wanted one; "but Jesus," for in glory even now, as He was in conduct, above them, "went to the Mount of Olives."

In the morning the houseless Saviour resumed the place of real if not human glory, that which He should make to Himself for a house in due time. And all the people came, and He sat down, as He was entitled and wont, and taught them. Again we have the scribes and Pharisees brought before us; not, observe however, merely the Jews, but those who in claim and office sat in Moses' seat. This, unable as they were to fulfil it themselves, they sought to turn against the Lord. It appears to me also that this chapter is supplementary to the former. As that gave the rivers of living water, which were till the glory, abounding over the Law (compare 2 Cor. iii.), so this the light of

the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ, as transcending the Law, and passing by judgment, not requiring a veil lest we perish, while yet it revealed the glory all the more perfectly and blessedly. Compare still 2 Cor. iii. and the following chapter, and the fifth previous, and this (the two characters of the Law and contrastedly of Christ) with them.

These scribes and Pharisees brought forward a woman taken in adultery (sin abhorred by God and man); a very flagrant case, but one [with] the spirit of which we have seen elsewhere these Pharisees to have been deeply infected. They propose the Law which Moses had commanded them, still in the very expression shewing no hatred of the crime or sin nor love of the sinner; but, while proud of the Law to them, using it merely to bring Jesus into collision with it, and so annul His own character, or else doubtless collision with the authorities (it was not lawful to put any man to death), and probably the benignity of His own character; while Satan doubtless meant to bring the Law and mercy into collision, and make the Lord upset the essence of His mission, or else defeat His pretensions with the Jews by upsetting their Law.

The object of the men was manifest: Moses commanded, but what sayest Thou? (while it seemed to set Him up on high). True, says our Lord, I will give the Law its full way. Let any of you that has not broken it act upon it. He individualizes them, and subjects them to it, allowing no haughty common taking up of its principles. There was in this a scornful rejection of their known wickedness, but, observe, a passing by

even of the Law as against them, no accusation of them, but a leaving them, as the madness of self-righteousness ever will, fully to commit themselves; that is, as insisting on the Law He would have let it pass; He would not carry the Law into effect as against them, nor did not. He fulfilled, but did not condemn by, the Law, blessed be His name! But the Law leaves men silent and confounded. Let him that is without sin bring it against his neighbour. Yet so would not Jesus. He loved His neighbour with the perfect love of the errand on which He came.

Whenever the calmness of the Divine presence leaves, or rather gives, place to conscience there is necessarily and universally the full self-condemnation, not necessarily in righteousness approving it, but in necessity of reflex of the Law let in. Accordingly, individually they went out one by one, instead of any first casting the stone. It was, "beginning at the eldest." Shame covered them; therefore went out the eldest first, thinking to be hid, because the more the accusation of self-righteousness the more the utter shame of the opened heart, the hard veil of pride being taken off; and this the Lord's presence will soon do. They would have applied the Law, but they could not for a moment stand the light of God let in upon their consciences; for it was not merely this sin: it was "he that is without sin." No sin is allowed or can stand in that light. It is not merely the Law good and just, though it be, but light is come into the world, and all that is reproved is made manifest by the light, for, etc. Our Lord, therefore, while He leaves the Law (if they can use it) standing; that is, as

a ground of condemnation, does not bring it against them. Neither shall they be condemned (though condemnable) for breaking the Law (they had before forfeited the land thus, as originally by disobedience); for, "If I had not come" among them, "they had not had sin"; yea, "If I had not done among them," etc. (chap. xv. 22, 24).

Nothing can be more marked, thus accurate or definite, than the position in which Christ is here towards the Law and those taking it up. He sets it aside, not by disannulling it, but by disabling all from taking it up as against any; that is, by conviction, while yet He does not condemn them, nor can they condemn others. Jesus is left alone with the woman. Then He lifts up Himself. Hitherto He had turned His face, or spoken only to leave them more effectually to themselves. Now He lifts up Himself, and when He sees Himself at liberty from them He addresses the woman, asking where were her accusers. He could not be blamed for acting as they had done, but He might have condemned her; for He was "without sin"; and if He had judged His judgment was just. But He did not come for that errand, but that indeed by "no condemnation" men might sin no more.

Thus He dismisses her therefore, but oh! with how much more value from Him, who might have condemned her were He so minded or so come! It was non-condemnation from Him from whom condemnation could come, who alone had the title to condemn.

—12. Our Lord proceeds to expound the great principles as regarded Himself. He declares Himself

the Light of the world, and this now connected still with His testimony as from the Father. We have seen elsewhere the force of the life being the light, Jesus being in life the embodier of the full character of the glory (as of the Only Begotten) of the Father, in the circumstances in which it was to be exhibited as Man. It was the perfect idea of God in Man. He that followeth Him, then, shall not walk in darkness. The light will be there before him. All else are in darkness, no matter what they are following. But these shall "walk," have their conversation, "in the light." Observe, it is following, for it regards practice and conversation; but it is the light of *life*, the living exemplification in the power of life (the will to walk in it marked in the following) in all the practice in which life is exhibited. But the point here is *that he has the light of life*. We have said that it is in contrast with the Law. Now, we have seen that this is positive. If the Law shone it was death. But indeed man could not bear it, and the Lord simply, as we have seen, shewing Himself abstractedly, would leave us silent and hiding ourselves as sinners. But He is something real and positive in Himself, the light of life; but it involves the life in one to walk in the light of this life; therefore "he that followeth," etc.

This then is the great thesis; one cannot say substitutory of the Law, for then it would seem to be confined to those to whom the Law was confined, and as limited, but it is full and perfect (the Law made nothing perfect); it is simply but altogether the light of the world. Then comes the fact, "He that followeth Me shall not," etc. (we have the individual as blessed

in it), "but shall have the light of life"; not of law, but of life, for he hath also life to enjoy it. The Law was to some, and imperfect; Christ was to all, that is, the world, and perfect. He presented Himself in this character (compare chap. i.), and that also; for this is a very broad principle ([see] chap. i. of the 1st Epistle of John); but this of the light He speaks now, even while in the world; for He was the light. Hence we have what is walking "in the light," and "as He is in the light"; in which none in themselves can stand; but also now, "if we confess," etc.

But this truth is very blessed, for it is indeed the full outshining of God the Father's essence and character into man in Jesus, nothing wanting; and of this we are made inherently possessors, that we might have communion with Him, even the Father, as in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the thesis. The manner of it is opened, and in this much of its real character. "Thou bearest witness of Thyself; Thy witness is not true" (*v.* 13). This regarded Jesus as a Man merely giving Himself a name or character in which He could not have been what He pretended to be. The assumption would have been the denial of it. Our Lord then shews that the very character of His testimony gave credence to the thing which He stated He was. He came to bear witness to the truth. In this He was the light, for His being sent was essential to the light, for it was of and from the Father; yet so as that He was the competent witness, and that Himself (though the Father also bore witness to Him by works and Himself). But though He bore

witness of Himself His witness was true, for He knew. And here we have the mystical union of our Lord. Speaking of Himself from knowledge which He had, though through His intelligence as Man, yet flowed from His union and Person; altogether a higher source; and in which therefore He could speak abstractly about Himself: "I know whence I came." He who came down from heaven, "even the Son of Man which is in heaven," He knew whence He came, even from heaven. He came down and He, Jesus, would go (for He who came down was now Jesus) to heaven; yea, indeed, far above all heavens. Here it is the great secret of all. "But ye do not know." They saw Jesus merely as any other man. They judged merely as natural men, and what the flesh could perceive, and that as to everything; but He (who might), bringing out the truth exhibited in the circumstances, judged no man.

We may observe here that our Lord does not rest here on His Divine authority or nature, but on His witness; because He was able, from His association with God, even the Father, whence He came, even from the Father, and whither He went, even to Him. He spoke as a faithful witness, a witness of the truth, and the Truth. He knew, and they did not know; yet they judged, and He did not. But that was love, and because He came as a witness, a Saviour, not a judge. Yet, if He had judged, His judgment was true. Not (observe again) simply because He was God; that is not what is brought forward here; but because He, the Son, Jesus, was not alone; but nevertheless that He had capability to judge: "*I* and the Father that sent Me."

This then is the great secret of this matter: He could say, "I." But He was now honouring the Father as a Man; and He saith, "I and the Father that sent Me." But that also testified His unity with the Father. It was testimony from the Father, which was now the glory of His name Jesus, and He therefore bore witness to the Father, His bounden duty and service as sent, and as Man; for He was "the brightness" (compare chap. xvii. 4, 5). All this will be vindicated, His Sonship, His own glory and the Father's, when He does judge, and this He might have done now; for, though in the weakness of the flesh, He knew, He was quite conscious, whence He came, and whither He went. But this humiliation was most glorious, that in which His saints see the full beams of the Sun of righteousness and glory of God, and the brighter because they shone and shine through the veil which did not, though it did, hide them; to them the veil of love. The glory of that Sun of righteousness was seen most sweetly when it was thus veiled and hidden. It could not have, nor has had, such reality as it had there; for with the very essence of humiliation it was the very embodying of the love and holiness and the bright and full glory of God. "It pleased that in Him *should all* fulness dwell."

In the deep consciousness of the competency of His testimony (of which the knowledge of His Person gave in faith the warrant, yet which was true from Him as Man, yet had not of course been had He not been what He testified), He rests it on their law, appealing to that on which they rested, though paramount to it; that is, in testimony. There was the testimony of the Father

to Him, but there was the independent (or it would have been useless), yet not distinct, of Himself. Here we have Him wonderfully equalized in competency of testimony with the Father, yet not wonderful to those who know Him; nor am I sure but that "men" might convey meaning. We have then the testimony by the union and His knowledge, we have it also in competency of testimony about Himself. The knowledge implied consciousness of this as the Christ, the Sent One. This gives independent though joint testimony, and His testimony must be true if so be that He were what He testified. Nor could He give testimony of what He was save being what He was, so as that the being it and the testimony are essentially and inseparably knit up together. He not only spoke and told them the truth, but He was the Truth, the reality of the things that He testified of. Nor was this less than that He was one with the Father, and came from Him. Hence, though the testimony was full and the responsibility complete, His testimony could be received only by revelation. "He that hath received His testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true." And, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." But this, while it was the truth, was the subject of the testimony that Jesus was the Son of God. They at once believed Him and what He was, and Him because He was that; and yet that by His testimony, as also the Father's by Him. Hence the Lord says (for the knowledge of the Person is the truth of the testimony), "Ye neither know Me nor My Father." Yet though this were the substance yet was it by testimony,

and so the Spirit brought in. It is the Word made flesh, and glorified, and now speaking by the Spirit, that is to be believed. Also, "If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also." For this also is essential in the truth that He was the revelation of the Father. But He, and He alone, is the point in which He must be met. If they had known Him (this was the point of trial and faith), they should have seen all through to the Father; they would have known the Father at once. The full glory of the Godhead within itself, manifested to us, unveiled, revealed, and we brought into perception of it and communion also with it in office. Wonderful thought, vast and boundless and Divine! My weary spirit finds its rest and strength and health and itself; by exceeding great and precious promises made partakers of the Divine nature.

But our Lord revealing or stating and shewing what He was, the world must needs kill Him. He was conscious of it. It was merely His hour was not yet come. Such was the enmity of man's mind against God. But the real history of this before God our Lord opens out, with the result as regards them, the resulting climax of what He was, and of their not receiving Him so in the time of His humiliation. "I go My way, and ye shall seek Me"; that is, Messiah, the Son of God, "and shall die in your sins," for ye would not, and did not, see and receive Me, who was the Messiah, the very true Son of God; your state of sin characterized in your unbelief in Me and non-subjection, which consisted in not seeing the true God in Him, though He was manifested in the flesh, nor knowing *Him*, nor

therefore His Father. "Where I go, there ye cannot come."

Our Lord does not mention His death, because He was speaking of Himself in His office, though introduced collaterally as that which took place in His Manhood, wherein also He so went, for it is the shining of His Person through all these circumstances which is now in hand, and discussed upon. The Jews felt here that the Lord had got out of the reach of their thoughts, but exhibited plainly at the same time that they were entirely confined to the present scene, and that they saw and could see nothing in Him beyond the Man that was before them. But our Lord could as to them. He opens another and a darker view; for they, while they sought to kill, were so overpassed by our Lord's statements as to reason upon their accomplishment by His killing Himself. There is a full opening out of the contrasted light and darkness in Himself and them: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above." "Ye are of this world" (it is the same thing); "I am not of this world." This was a very distinct assertion. It was of Himself, not His mission merely, but of Himself; it related to His Person; it was the point in question: "I am not of this world." Their thoughts therefore were distanced. He unfolds it: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above." The exhibition of this character was that in the presence and exhibition of Him who was from above they remained of this world; it was this non-perception of the light which left them in this hopeless state. "Therefore said I, that ye shall die in your sins," the non-perception of who He was, the non-

reception of Him where He was. He would leave them in the accumulated sins of their unregenerate state. Had they believed, all would have been left where their unregenerate nature was left, gone.

The reality, truth, of our Lord's Person, the great point brought out in this chapter, and connected with the sureness and weight of His testimony, is brought out with great power and perspicuity in this expression of our Lord's: "that I am," that it is I; the consciousness of the essentiality of His Person, in which He gave witness not perceived by them, but adequately witnessed in and of and by Him; above all, in Him; but on the perception of which hung eternal life, and was eternal life; and not to perceive its blindness and sin, the sin of blindness. The Jews therefore ask, "Who art Thou?" They announce their non-perception of this. Our Lord identifies it with His testimony: I am what I have spoken of; I do declare it; I speak it; My speech is it; that is, It is it speaketh; that is, I speak it to you; I speak from the beginning and am from the beginning the same thing; I am that original of truth which also I declare to you, and have at all times; the same that I have spoken to you from the beginning; I have just declared the same thing.

But you will observe it is the present tense, it is the identity of His Person in testimony He (the Lord) still speaketh of: I do speak forth My Person from the beginning, in its original essentiality of Person, effectuating the counsel which was the primary and constant end of the Trinity: "For it pleased that in Him should all fulness dwell"; and here He was, and so speaking;

therefore He had title to speak and to judge, for He now speaks from His Person, which entitled Him so to speak.

They were striving to judge because they could not discern Him. But He had many things to speak and to judge. But indeed, though He was this, He had now another office, testimony, and He must have Himself (and willingly in service to His Father in that work of love), not judging, but to be judged by the world outwardly. But He had not to speak of Himself, or bear witness indeed; be it that He spake not truth (that is, in character); but He that sent Him was true. This He must do, and what things He had heard of Him He spake to the world. He must leave them to exercise their own judgment. They might exercise it, but He had a commission to the world. This also He spake in the consciousness of His Person. He spake (as we have seen, in this character, and all through this Gospel) in a wider scope (though being so sent in dispensation to them), to the world. He spake, as we have seen, in the consciousness of His Person (which we have seen also the point of this Gospel) from Him that sent Him. This vagueness, so to speak (for it is most precise), is purposed. It was not from the Father to the world, for He could not speak as from the world's Father; but He was the Son, and He spoke from Him that sent Him; and He knew Him as the Father; so it is said, "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world." But He spake not merely from God; He was God, but He spake from Him who was the Father; and believers can so speak fully, for they know it,

because they know the Son, whereby they know the Father; also they use full *pangeesia*, compare 1 John iv. 14.

They knew not (therefore they "crucified the Lord of glory") that He spoke to them of the Father. John knew, and so spake, therefore interpreting it by the Spirit to us. The Sonship, the Person, and the office as such (that is, as Son), that is, to the world (compare Isaiah xlix. 5) are here all brought out in their connection (in mystery) very fully and plainly, with the understanding to the believer of that of which they (the Jews) to whom He was sent were ignorant, that it was the Father. But the point of testimony, the office of the Son so sent (we speak not of His death), is brought out in connection with His Person, which gave it its validity, which therefore became the point of perception, which they did not see, and which revealed of necessity also the Father. The manner in which this would be (the strange manner) opened out; the Lord now there, on their ignorance, to declare. But He begins with the first point, "that I am." The manner in which this would be shewn was lifting up the Son of Man. Here we have the distinctness of the position in which He stood and was, and stood amongst them, but in the nature; that is, generically, the Son of Man. In this He was abstractly liable, and submitted, to their power. But when they (the Jews) had lifted up the Son of Man (this should be their office in it, the end doubly of their blindness, that is, in principle) they should know (this is a very deep and wondrous point, the development of His Person in His death) His Person, and that it was

He. And nevertheless also nothing was done from Himself (if it had as Man before them they might have called it in question), it would not have been the witness of the "I am," He the Son so there. For the difference of the personality in the two natures is wonderfully, speaking after the manner of men, elaborately (for it is simple and clear in the Spirit) marked and brought before us in this chapter.

While as Son He had all title, yet all His title with man was His doing nothing from Himself, and in testimony to them speaking nothing but what the Father taught Him, nothing. But this was marvellous (to us), yet most true in Him. Oh, how silent should we be if we so spake! Yet He did it because He was Son, for otherwise He could not have revealed the Father, nay, nor spoken from Him.

How does this wonderful chapter, while in the perfect simplicity which it has in God, but incomprehensible in itself to man, yet while it tells all the truth, leaving it impossible to see it altogether in one view, because none could know it but One, yet meet, by the very necessity of the case, so that all the truth of it being in what might seem to man contradiction, meet every difficulty and every attempt of man to go beyond the truth, falling into the heresy of his own thoughts! For the point of His doing nothing alone, or from Himself, is the point that proves our Lord's Sonship, thus hanging His glory on His apparent humiliation. Had He done it from Himself it would have been merely a judgable man, or there could have been no Father. So surely does the truth, when known,

prove itself, as it is incomprehensible to them that know it not.

We have the Son of Man, the Son sent of the Father, the "from Myself," speaking in personality, yet having its truth in His Manhood, yet including also "taught Me," again in Person, but also speaking in His Manhood, and "who sent Me," again His Person, yet as Son. But we do but weaken it in attempting to evolve it, clearly expressed in the text, and that in its relationship; that is, towards the world, and position towards the Jews. But the point is the Sonship: the manner of its display proved the humanity (the nature, the Son of Man) as it did also the riches of the love. His testimony also (for this He came) was perfect; this also was given as Man, though He learnt it as Son. "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father."

Further, though sent, and though the Son, He did not act in the energy of that power; for so He could not, properly speaking, have obeyed. That He learned in Man. But He that sent Him was with Him. He avowed this as the incontrovertible sanction to the world, to be proved in the day of His glory, as it was to the believer by His resurrection, seen perhaps indeed before, though not distinctly known, "marked out." He avowed His dependence, Jesus did, for now He declareth His Manhood: also, "He hath not left Me *alone*." He, the Son, avoweth it, though He avoweth it of Himself as Man. Compare just in the Garden of Gethsemane. "He that sent Me," saith He, the Son, "is with Me; the Father hath not left Me" (here conversant, putting

My trust in Him, but yet Son in this world), "alone; because I do always the things that please Him." A reward for His faithfulness as Man was His not being left by the Father.

How incomparably does it unite (affirm together, that is) and separate all the truth concerning our Lord! He spoke as the Son, or His testimony was worthless, and therefore "that I am"; yet as Man, or there could have been no question. He acted as Man, yet doing all things to please His Father, who left Him not alone, therefore, but was with Him as the Son, and the lowest humiliation of the Man making the greatest exaltation of the Son, and proving to the blind the very essentiality of His Sonship, as we have seen; the testimony made available as the Son's because He gave it not from Himself but from the Father. Men would set aside one of the two stated in these last verses. They are our Lord's summary of both, and His office and position as well, from "Who art thou?" We have it drawn out from the "They knew not," etc., "when ye shall have lifted up"; we have it definitely and explicitly stated, and incorporated with the manner of manifestation and the founding of recognition of Him as manifesting it in His Manhood. It is sure and intelligible and most blessed to faith. The point of all is *seeing the Son.* Some have erred in this, yea, and on either side. It is not His Divinity but His Sonship that reveals it. Neither is it His not doing anything of Himself, unless also His Sonship be seen. This is the key to both. This He speaks of Himself as presented to the world (then to the Jews).

We have then hitherto (the Light of the world) the mission in Man, the Son of Man, and the order and scope of this as flowing from the Person here perfectly brought before us. But the specific character of that which we have seen is the Person of the Son *in the Manhood*, without marking (though intimately connected with and essential to it) His Divinity. Also, on the other hand, the character of the darkness, that as it was of this world. Jesus was not of this world. So more definitely that was not merely character, though it was so, but more originally it was from beneath. He was from above. But our Lord pursues it now on their insolent rejection (as humbling them) of the boon, consequent on the maintenance of their convictions, much further, yea into its full recesses, the truth of what was manifested in Him and them; the humbleness, that is, the disinterestedness, of His assertion, disdaining all glory to Himself, and giving it to God; the simple evidence of that truth, that is, His association with God, even the Father, evinced in the ostensible truth of His always doing such things as pleased Him, as making Himself only a Servant, yet herein vindicating His connection with the Father. These things, thus stamped with truth in the character of their utterance, brought rational conviction to the minds of many who heard Him; for His word, we have seen, was the witness of His truth; and it was indeed His character, we know, in Divinity, and so developed in Man; that is, it was a spoken as also a substituting and therefore acted word. But this was the effect of the manifestation by word: "Many believed on Him."

Then the subsequent address takes up this character; it takes the word as the vital point of continuance. *No other association would do.* It was thus there was life, and they were His disciples, and they should be free, knowing the truth. They thought, though they might recognize Him, this was rather doing Him an honour, being recognized by Jews, that their association of Him to them, in whatever character it was, was the point of establishment and honour to Him. But the truth of His Deity, and *that alone*, prevented this. Had He been anything else it would have been so. He in the consciousness of His Person and truth tells them that adherence to Him is the way of freedom; and the utmost honour of association He proposes is that they should be His disciples indeed. But His word implied His character and truth, involving also the moral necessity on their part; and this therefore He sets first. I say "consciousness of His Person and truth," and this rather in it simply, not addressively, save to them as men, but as embracing the scope of His thoughts, but as before manifested in His Manhood, so now formatively acquiring its title from His being God, antecedent, as we shall see (and in the power of this acting), to all their divinely instituted incorporation and root on which they rested: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (blessed be His name!).

There is another point of view in which we may look at this chapter. As Son of Man our Lord was to the world. They took on them the character of seed of Abraham. This therefore now came in to be solved, though indeed our Lord [was], as the Apostle proves in

Galatians, and we are, the seed of Abraham; though also "He takes hold of the seed of Abraham." Nevertheless here it is concerned in the question of Light of the world. Thus He was as Son of Man (speaking the glory of the Person of the Son), in this character, He claims affiance in Him for the truth which should make them free. They allege the seed of Abraham. Our Lord meets it, not by coincident claim, for indeed it was in rejection of Him that He became alone the Seed of Abraham before God, but in that in which they rejected Him, that which validated His claim to their incorporation into His word, His claim over them, that which made His word, His assumption, true and necessary: "Before Abraham was, I AM." Not simply "I AM," but validating the claiming word against their seedship: "Before Abraham was, I AM."

The assumption of our Lord was high, very high. "If ye continue in My word, then," what? "then are ye My disciples indeed," to take His word as all; and then the great consequent privilege to be, they should be His disciples indeed. But this was a great point indeed, for it supposed apprehension of the moral character of His mission, the witness, the substance, of God's truth; the truth; what God was. Indeed, in Him, by His word, God expressed the truth, the verification of the word, which the coming of the Son of Man, being Son of God, was, and went beyond dispensation, as entitled, being "I AM" before it. For Abraham is the root of all dispensation properly; that is, in connection with redemption, with the glory of the manhood which the Lord here shews. He was before, and thus gives

the crowning truth on which it all hung: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Let us pursue this; that is, these verses in order. And first we may remark that we have here the announcement from this very Person of Christ, the great moral principle of association, affranchisement with God. For affranchisement and association are one, and only perfect with God; and this associated with the primary root of God's character, of which the word of Christ was the expression. And therefore, "If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." Independence was rebellion, and not liberty, but servitude to sin. They separated Abraham from God, and attached him to themselves (they therefore were in this state); He, the Lord, to Himself, but righteously, for before Abraham was He was "I AM," and as to them, because as Son He appeared rightfully associating in power with the liberty of the house. The Sonship is still the point to see as regards the association with Deity; that is, in exercise, as well as with the Manhood, and none can see why who do not see it. It is the point of communion, and also of exercitial [exercisable?] authority.

This great and high assumption (for He addressed it *to the Jews* that believed on Him) of associating them with Him in order to their having freedom, resting it, as we have seen, on His word, they meet by the assertion that they were Abraham's seed, and never in bondage to any man. This, though an out of the way assertion, taken in its broad character, yet associated

with the liberty of their law, and their assumption of personal freedom, brought it just to that moral point, setting their association up against that moral freedom which the Lord presented, and which reached the world in the paramountness of God's character and purpose. How do you say, therefore they ask, ye shall be or become free? For they claimed liberty as Abraham's seed. Our Lord still followed the bearing of the great truth which He had set out with from the beginning, and which closed in affranchisement, association with God, the dispensation of that large association with Him which flowed from His moral character: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that committeth sin is the servant of sin." This is a broad, abstract, universal principle; he is not the free man of God. God's nature was the opposite, the estimate as light of what sin was (this the Lord manifested).

The Law did not deliver them from this, and could not do it. Their association with Abraham was fleshly, and so suited to, had its scope through, the Law. But this left them, as to association with God, still servants, and faulty servants, having no living place in the house, and indeed failing wholly upon the principle of association with Him in His moral character. As such, their tenure was mere matter of allowance, sufferance, to say it in the true but gentlest shape, and "for ever" was the only time when association was really shewn: "The servant abideth not in the house" (here was question of God's house) "for ever; but the Son abideth ever." He still speaks ambiguously, that is; which was unintelligible to one who did not receive the train of

thought, but revealing here to us. It is too direct to call it a parable, for the terms are identical, a direct new point in the progressive view which this is giving us of Him as the Light of the world, the Son, the Son as to the house, as in Hebrews, which shews its strong Jewish connection. Hence, "I have brought My son out of Egypt; for Israel is My son," etc. The Israel character of Christ is not sufficiently attended to. It was a most essential point, abstract indeed, but announcing most distinctly the Person when the force of the passage was received, a great advance upon what we have received before. We have had (as Man) the Father spoken of, and also "that I am," as Son of Man; but now we have it concentrated into the great truth, the Son; this established as a principle, and stated, but also indeed a truth concentrated in Person, which is the truth, because it was of God in Him. Hence Pilate: "What is truth?" and He, "I am the Truth," etc.

From the detail in which He had been speaking of Himself we shall see the Lord again, as realizing this to Himself thus announced, speaking in this character in further detail, and leading up as from the Manhood hither; from this to the essentiality of that nature in which He saith, "Before Abraham was, I AM." But this is concentrating in principle (if they could understand) all the elements of His character manifested as the Light into this great leading truth, the Son; and it was this Light in power, for "He shall make you free." First His intrinsic title (which they had not) in the house as abiding there ("the Son abideth ever"), but manifested in association with them; for here He

speaketh to them, but so as to maintain His necessary place as such, for so only could God. As developed therefore He states it in principle, because they must submit to this; then the consequence of His freeing them therefore. He only had the inheritance-title from God; for they were servants, slaves. Before, "the truth shall make you free," but now He must assert further it was thus the light of the truth, came in it, was as in the moral character of God. They were made free in the truth, but this was concentrated, all concentrated in Him, and that in necessary administrative power from God: "The Son shall make you free." I say "necessary," not as we could judge it from deduction, but as He was the Word, and therefore the necessary witness of the truth of God in His Person, willingly so to us, so necessary in the glory; willingly in grace, that is, to us, and thus made known as the Son, and so having in God's house (though administratively, therefore He says, "My Father is greater than I,") the necessary title of Son. So if the Son made them free they should be free indeed (in truth), for He was the truth of God, and also the Son. They knew it in Him, and were made necessarily (that is, morally and graciously, in the full honour of authority, necessary authority,) free, brought into freedom with the Son abiding in the house for ever. It was boon to them.

The Lord yearns over them characteristically; nay, His ministry, His service, was to them (see Isaiah xlix.). But we shall see what they were; so the Lord states it. He had said "the Son"; now He begins to develop it in its action (when manifested in the flesh), "*My* Father."

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed." The Lord recognizes the dispensation, as always. But this did not alter the truth of moral character on which the whole depended, distinctly brought out in its cause, principle, and manifestation. "*But* ye seek to kill *Me*," Me the Light, the Truth, because "My *word*" does not dwell in you. There was the great thing. The contrast was complete. He in testimony, His service; they in act, exercising their will in murder ("for the," etc). "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father, and ye do the things which ye have seen with your father." Sad, as glorious, intimacy of association. But the Jews saw nothing beyond their present false associations. The devil, Satan, works (observe) by deceit, by unconsciousness. The power of present things is of the devil; the perception of them, of God. God is the revealer; Christ the instrument in Person, but that in testimony, and as the Word; the understanding, of His Spirit (being equal matter of revelation of the sense of it); for present things, as named, are known by known words; but in truth, by the knowledge of the things, of God's teaching, the understanding, if God's Spirit comes. (Note, this I think is marked in the Hebrew language.)

But there the Jews rested: Our father is Abraham. This was defensive. It was not, We are Abraham's seed. There was some pressure in their minds; their conscience as to pressure was affected so far as to be silenced a little, and set on defensive; for our Lord had brought out the fact of moral alienation, yet as so defensive it was a higher assumption. It was not Abraham's association with their assumed dignity before the Lord, but their associa-

tion, correspondent association, with him as affecting the assertion, "Ye do that which ye have seen with your father." But it was defensive, and for themselves gave the inference (though hesitatingly) of their righteousness, still on the same ground generally.

Our Lord still holds to the moral, the Divine, character of the association. He knew they were Abraham's seed; yea, He had spent His life towards them because they were. But if they had been Abraham's children they would have acted in Abraham's character, done Abraham's works. But now, instead of this, "Ye seek to kill Me" (that is, there was the spirit of essential hostility, of murder, against the truth from God); "a Man who have spoken to you *the truth*, which I have heard with God": "this did not Abraham." The essentiality of their opposing characters is very distinctly, with the power of nakedness of truth, brought out; that is, in giving the facts, the essentially characteristic facts.

But our Lord adds more: "Ye do the works of your father." He approacheth here on sadder and yet plainer grounds. The conversation of our Lord here is remarkable; guarded, that is, restrained, in expression, yet containing in terms of the utmost moral force, excluding all mixture of extraneous matter, the whole, real truth as regards them. Yet till they in blindness of moral apprehension in their now conscious weakness in justifying defence, pleading their dispensed privilege, as implying, in credit to themselves, moral title as against moral truth, allege it even up to their association with God, does our Lord bring out the real depth in open

charge against them, because the contrary exposing truth must be revealed.

Let us learn a lesson from this; for the assertion of the force of evil, before the position of the evil is therein exposed in the light, may shock but cannot operate on the conscience, nor justify God against that soul. Yet all evil is really so. There was evil in the young man that Jesus loved, but He did not speak as here. Yet we are not less to qualify the evil, nor call it good. I speak here merely [of] how consciences are to be actually reached. They said unto Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." How far can man deceive himself by dispensed privileges, and the legitimate succession of them, when the moral character of God is not brought before them! Yea, how, *when morally corrupt*, do these hide it from them, prevent their seeing its necessity!

The Lord brings them here (such is always the office of Christ in, as here often stated, His word) into full contrast, for He holds them both united, and therefore can. Man can use one against the other. Christ, then in testimony, once yet in power, shall bring them both together; always in Person, for He is the Word, and being made flesh has, the Son, the rightful inheritance in His own name, therein glorifying the Father. How strange the word, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed": "Ye are of your father the devil"! Power and civil establishment, civil and religious phases of the same thing, cannot be properly united with truth, save in Jesus. While this is not so, we are subject in testimony, yea, in testimony to both in this sense. The Spirit is

given, it is given from the power in testimony of the truth, and in its power bears witness to both. This is the great thing which the world (and the Church, forgetful of its place,) has in vain sought to solve. Christianity solves it perfectly. It can only solve it actually (till Jesus assume the power) by consenting to suffer; for till then both are not simply united, and may be all averse. Then Jesus will judge as well say, "When God arises." But Jesus united in Himself all rightful title (in that, concentrated in His Person, and as in the purpose of God, He was Abraham's Seed), and also did the truth. He was that One He came as, and He was Son of God, Heir in yet higher title; could say, "Before Abraham was, I AM."

Jesus yet puts it not on His title, but on God's; if they were children of God. "If God were your Father" (He speaks from the consciousness of what He was, for He, as well as it, was the truth), "ye would love Me." He tests the moral connection of their hearts with God by the truth, that is, by Himself; yet taking no honour to Himself, but bringing them into the juxtaposition they had put themselves in: children of God if—then so, "for I came forth, and came from God" (this was one point); "for I have not come of Myself"; no more than as a Man He spoke of Himself, but as He heard of the Father, as the Father gave Him commandment; so, "but He sent Me." But the Jews had closed the evidence of what they were. The full contrast of their state had been brought out, fully brought out, and their blindness in capability of apprehension of the things. Our Lord therefore adds, "Why do ye not understand

My speech," My expressions? "Even because ye cannot hear My word," the thing I speak.

Our Lord's words were but the echo of what He expressed and was as Word. His word was very plain; gently, but fully, morally, brought things into contrast. But they had no moral discernment. He therefore tells the broad truth. Satan blinds the minds of them that believe not, the god of this world. But they did not know what really "beneath" and "above" were, or they would not have misunderstood His meaning, and talking about His Father, and their father. For God had not yet been spoken of, till they asserted they were born of Him. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye are willing to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because the truth was not *in him*."

This was a precise picture, and they "children," and in contrast with what He was who was the Truth. All the developed points of this reasoning are concentrated here; for as seed of Abraham and of God they had not abode in the truth, and because the point our Lord urges, and they sought to kill Him. When Christ spake He spake the truth, that which was indeed His own, but was also of the Father. But he, when he would speak a lie (abstractly, as we say *the* truth,) he speaketh out of that which is his properly, out of his own goods or household. For He (our Lord) had right so to speak of him: he [the devil] is a liar, and from him it proceeds; he is the father of it.

A lie has no existence; it is the product of some storehouse, the proper fruit and vain progeny of some

one so in character. The truth has, or it would not be truth; and Christ was it. They were a lie, not Abraham's seed, but the lie of it, not the truth. Christ was the Truth, therefore they were children of the devil; for this lie had no existence but as the progeny of him that was the father of lies, who spoke it; for when he would speak it he must speak it, and did, out of his own; he was the father (no word so correct) of it, being a liar. A liar is always the father of the lie. The argument is then strictly moral, as from the nature of a lie to their necessary childhood of Satan, which our Lord spoke in consciousness of truth. For indeed He was that in truth of which they assumed the place, denying Him while yet they had the responsibility, but abode not in the truth; for they were Abraham's seed. Nothing can be more complete than the depth of this moral conviction, while He spake it as the Truth, for He was the Truth; and His word and He, and therefore the truth of it, were one. The authority and the moral evidence went together. The *to pseudos* (falsehood) is abstract; the *autou* (of it) is necessary to the sense when the lie is spoken of as the born progeny of the lying person. So that the construction, though it seem obscure in general, is necessary to the sense. "But I, because I speak the truth, ye will not believe Me." They did not believe it or Him, because it was, and He spoke, the truth; for the truth was not in them; it was the thing opposite to their judgment, to the truth of the lie which they were assuming themselves to be, and Him because He said He was of God, which was the only and saving

truth. But therefore they did not believe Him. It was the cause why they should. Yet they could prove no sin against Him; and, if not, why not believe Him? Was He not speaking the truth? And therefore the truth, the connection of His being what He spoke, the Word of God, is the great force of all this argument as to the truth, etc.

The two great evidences of affiance and affinity to Satan were in these great essential points of moral evil in his character, points which uniformly run through Scripture, violence and deceit (or want of truth). He was a murderer, and abode not in the truth. They sought to kill Him; and because He told them the truth they would not believe Him. I say uniform character: "The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." "He did no violence, neither was guile found in His mouth." And so elsewhere. But our Lord now dwells upon the truth in their hearing, not merely the truth (which is one point, and they could not convince Him, Jesus, of sin, and therefore ought to believe Him), but as alleging themselves children of God also. "He that is of God heareth God's words," recognizes and receives, attends to [them], as such. "Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God." Our Lord knew this, for He knew His words were of God, or He would not be true at all. The authority and the truth were mixed (compare chap. iii. 33), and yet see how it is identified with His humanity: "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure," in the following verse.

Till we see the Son speaking by the Spirit in and through Jesus we can never understand this chapter,

nor indeed that which is revealed of the Person and manifestation and revelation of our Lord; while indeed we shall never know Him fully, for "no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father"; it is His prerogative, and also the prerogative of the Son as such. He requires as real a manifestation to reveal Him as the Father, and who shall do that? The Spirit comes, given of *Jesus* to reveal what Jesus is; but the Godhead of the Son stands behind the glory of the Person of Immanuel. This, that is, Immanuel, it imports us to know, and this therefore is it that is revealed. This is all to us. We know the Man, the Son, standing there. This is the link to our souls. If we knew Him simply as the Son we should be as far off as ever. Not so of the Father, for we know Him as such, which is what we want, adequately, yea blessedly, revealed by the Son, even the Lord Jesus. But if we so knew the Son we should return back, so to speak, into the simple Godhead (which is impossible for us to do), and not in relationship of love, even as the *Father* to us. That we know in His becoming Man. Here then it is we know the Son, we know Jesus; here is His relationship of love to us, in His becoming a Man, to know. My point is to know that Jesus is the Son; yea, that Jesus died for me; not who the Son is. Here I have the Father's love, and Jesus' love, and the mystery of God, even, etc.

Now, in agency God always acts communicatively by the Spirit. It is the way of the Spirit's glory, in which He is known as God, and in which God is glorified. Therefore I do not doubt, nay, we are told so, that the Spirit spoke in Jesus; that is, God spake in the Man by

the Spirit. But it was the Godhead of the Son that dwelt personally in Jesus, or He would not have spoken the Father's words by the Spirit as a Man. If we do not see these things (always darkly, through our weakness and imbecility) we separate what cannot be separated, the Trinity. That Jesus was the Son of God, that the Father that dwelt in Him did the works, and that Jesus spake by the Spirit without measure, are alike necessary truth; and one part would not be true without the other, cannot be separated, and one proves all, rightly understood (compare too chap. iii. 13).

Our Lord's reason was prompt and conclusive: "Therefore ye hear not, because ye are not of God." This being what is spoken, it is the consciousness of God; that is, the truth of and from God against apparent authority. This was His honour, but it was not apparent. Theirs was; it was the character and ostentation of the thing from men; His the truth from God. Our Lord therefore is distinct in His *moral* charge, alleging on the other hand that they could not convince Him of sin, and that they were not of God for not hearing Him. The Jews take the external charge or reproach: "Say we not well" (when Thou sayest we are not of God, we Jews), "that thou art a Samaritan" (it proves that can be the only ground they argue from, the external title, He from the moral, internal one from God, the truth), "and hast a devil?" To say we are not of God, it was the part of a Samaritan as regarded their external dispensation; of a devil, they alleged, as regarded their relationship to God; to deny indeed all the Jewish privileges of old, sealed of God, and confessedly

so, because while He owned them as such they would not hear Him. Yet so it was. Such is the question between the Church, so called, and those who in the Spirit hold the truth as it is in Jesus: in the saints imperfect; in Him most (yet not most, for there could be no degree,) perfect. The Lord denied it simply as related to the point, any real point: "But I honour My Father," I vindicate Him from the false association to which you would bring Him, and manifest and declare and vindicate His true character; and ye do not see all this in Me, but "ye dishonour Me." Ye falsely accuse Me, ye are lying against My honour and truth and glory, what I am. But this is no matter; I seek not Mine own glory (this could be forgiven); and if ye dishonour Me, and I do not seek Mine own glory, so that I must leave it there, there is One that seeketh and judgeth My glory and your falsehood against it.

Our Lord now approaches nearer to the source of that in which He thus stood as the Light of the world. As the Father had life in Himself, so had He given to the Son to have life in Himself; given because He had it in Him, as Jesus, as Man; and as such He spake it. The words that He spake were spirit and they were life. He spake (though as Man that He might suffer) fresh from God.

Now, in this He was directly associated with the Father. As the Word He had become Man, and therefore attributed nothing to Himself, but to the Father. But it was truth, truth of fidelity, which could come only from an equal to do so. It is the King's Majesty which alone can assume the subject title. It was "the

life was the light of men," and the words that He spake (for He came in word), were spirit and life. In this He was associated with the Father in the power of eternal life.

Here therefore He saith, "If a man keep My saying," for He was leading them up to God, "he shall never see death." This word was the power of life to men. If kept, it was eternal life. The power of death was in the lie and in the power of Satan. But life was in Jesus. If we die we simply lose death in dying. There are deep enquiries into truth connected with this, which we do not follow here. But the assertion, though proposal of blessing to them, directly involved what Jesus was. They saw the Word merely externally, and the Man, and therefore the word was madness. No Abraham or prophet was on such ground. Beyond them they could not go; and in them merely what they were externally, and so saw nothing of God.

They thought they were now clearly justified in rejecting such a Man, however He might have troubled them. "Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead: whom makest Thou *Thyself?*" Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing." This was just, as being Man; but it was true as God, for it would have disowned the Deity were it so. The Father glorifies the Son; the Son glorifies the Father; the Spirit both; while yet it is in it alone we know the Godhead or God.

"It is My Father that glorifieth Me; of whom ye say that He is your God: and ye have not known Him." Here was the real truth of all, the solution of the great

question. "But I have known Him; and if I said, I know Him not," if I should not own these great truths, then "I should be like you, a liar." All they were was a lie, from their father, the devil; assuming what they were not, and implying their association with God, which, while it was their false boast, was their lie. They said they knew Him. *This* was their lie. Their assertion of their association with God was the proof of their being of their father, the devil, being what they were. Jesus's saying He was of the Father was the truth of His Person and of His word. Their saying they were of Him as their God was the lie; and the character of the lie we have had before.

Our Lord must have owned it, or He could not be what He was, and stated Himself to be: "But I know Him, and I keep His word"; true in Him, false in them. They belied their alleged origin. He did keep His Father's word; He was true. The keeping of His was eternal life. But He kept His Father's word; He was true: I am the very object of all the hopes of those you speak of, the truth, plan, in cause and effect, of all the system you falsify. It was "My day" that made the very Abraham you boast in glad, and he had faith in that which you are rejecting; he was the opposite of you. I was his glory; he delighted in it; his triumph was that he should see My day; and he saw it, and rejoiced; Messiah's day, the object of all the types, the very Israel of the Israel of God.

But the Jews were immersed, not in the truth of their system, but in the mere ignorance of acting on present appearances. This is a most deep, essential principle of

error which one has to watch; not seeing God, and things according to the mind of God (which was exactly the thing in question), but the mind of man, and that in the things of God; and hence precisely the present state of the Church. It was the grand question between Jesus and the Jews, and the point in which Jesus has to be recognized, and in which faithfulness to Him rests, as in Him to His Father, to this extent.

"The Jews therefore said to Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?" They thought the sense of this the same, because they looked not beyond the outside; but, on man's ground, the Jews' reasoning was generally correct, but it was utterly, morally wrong, without conscience, therefore without God and that which God alone could teach. They now brought it to the point of the mere Manhood of Christ, the point of their darkness. Our Lord, as the Truth, could but give the light: "Before Abraham was"; ye see not who I am, ye know not My existence, My Being, know ye not Me: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM."

The great truth was told, the essential, the vital, eternal truth, on which all hung, without which there could be no truth, nor any coming unto man, nor bringing man back in redemption to God. For how could he be restored by that which was not? And that was true of everything, save One. Should dust be a redeemer? Yet out of dust he was to be redeemed.

The great truth was declared. Lie there could be none against it. The necessity of the existence of the Saviour assumed the nothingness of all else, could be

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denied only by violence, not falsified. That a man should say this was blasphemy; and they took up, in their zeal for God, rejecting Him manifested, they took up stones to stone Him. But the time of their iniquity was not yet come, and Jesus was hid. His time was not come, and He went out of the temple.

But what circumstances! and with whom discussed! and what a truth! Do we believe it? Do we, I say, believe it, that Jesus (a Man even as we are, save sin,) was I AM? All is told, if we believe Him thus dead and alive again; for therein is the redemption. Through this must He pass.

Is it true? Most simply true, the centre (wondrous! wondrous! to us) of all the manifestation of God, and rightly in its glory, to chosen sinners; lovely in its blessing to all sinners; deep, therefore essential; necessary, in its condemnation, to blind rejecting sinners: God manifest in the flesh! "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached to the Gentiles" (so here), "believed on in the world," yet more wondrous still, "received up into glory." Marvellous in its character! This, as to the essential truth, He was: I AM.

Then, as to the dispensation, the thing thus revealed, or rather discussed with the Jews, the subject of the chapter which we have been reading, this deep, most deep chapter, we have seen how the Lord is traced as Light of the world; as Son of Man lifted up; all through as the Son in the power of life, in Person as Son, to this great revelation of I AM; Son of Man to the world, and

yet Son of God; and as Son of God the real truth and fulfiller of all Jewish hopes, as the basis of all common promises; and this as, and by, the Word. This is the essential characteristic. I know of nothing that has ever astounded my mind as this revelation of I AM, or the real thought that Jesus could say, "I AM"; the connection of these (to man) inconnectible possibilities, and the wonderful concatenation in which all the dispensations of God are wrought out or fulfilled in it, while yet He remains truly God; and yet could say therein, "the Son of Man who is in heaven."

And how manifest it is that nothing but the gift of faith could ever in a single tittle understand or know the truth in the Person of Jesus! while yet, by the perfection of its manifestation in the flesh, every soul was put under utter responsibility of rejecting it as the true word of God, even God in love. But the broad and penetrating fact, "I AM," the all-embracing word, the everything in it, it must at once close all controversy. We must be opposers, or bow before the throne of God. We must stand in awe of Jesus. Well may He say, "Kiss the Son."

Oh! Jesus, Jesus, what sort of subjection is this we ought to have to Thee? We have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now our eye seeth Thee, we abhor ourselves indeed. Oh! can it be true? Can we see this in Jesus? Have we seen it? None can see it out of Him. It is the truth only in Him. Surely we should move mountains if we believed this. Yet is it simple truth. Dwell on it, my soul! Jesus, that thou knowest, that Stranger in the world among His own,

was "I AM." Hast thou believed it? Yet thou now wilt believe it. But thou knowest Jesus. Henceforth let me be dead to all but this. I do indeed stand incapable of utterance; I do read with Jesus, talk [with], and watch Jesus in His ways, a Servant, and behold He, even He, is "I AM," with whom I am, whose ways I judge, whose grace I adore. Oh! it is the union of these two things, the Man, the rejected Man by the world, Him whom I look at now with perfect sympathy. Behold! it is the presence of God. Oh! how low it lays men's thoughts, experiences, judgments, notions! The perfection of God stood there, God rejected of men. What can meet or have a place along with this? Let this be my experience. Glory be to God Most High. Amen.

Yet to me it is Jesus. In truth it is "I AM." Here I rest; here I dwell; to this I return; this is all in all. I can only be silent, yet would speak what no tongue can utter, and no thought can think, before it. This we shall learn for ever, grow in for ever, [yet shall it] grow more beyond us for ever; for here is God revealed in His essential name, His name of existence, His own name, God revealed in Man, in Jesus. I know Him, I am familiar with Jesus, at home with God, honouring the Father in Him, and Him as one with, and with, the Father; delighting to do it. But I say, Do we believe it?

I do believe it all; yet I believe nothing; I am as nothing in the thought of it, yet alive for evermore by it. Blessed be God and His name! And all shall praise Him so. Yea, Jesus! Jesus! God Most High, so shall it be. Oh, Jesus! Jesus! Thou art "I AM," Thou art

"I AM." Yet didst Thou, did "I AM," take little children in His arms! Yea, didst Thou suffer, die, and be in the horrible pit; yea, for our sins! Thus I know the mercy-seat. I know that there is no imputing sins here; yea, that it is God not imputing, that I am reconciled to God; yea, rather, that God is the reconciling One. I am therefore at home with God; and all that is in Jesus is God's manner to us.

I know not that I have at all drawn out the things which are opened to us in this chapter. It is the word of testimony to what Jesus is, the Son, to what they that oppose Him are; reluctantly drawn out from the lips of Jesus as necessary to the truth; the restrainedness, yet therefore perfect faithfulness, of testimony, the power of the real Sonship, and mind of God (contrasted with the form) in power in this world; the witness in sackcloth; the word as the word of testimony, the truth of God; not in judgment; and meeting the world in its glory, with the form most subtle to reject the truth, even the dispensations in which it had been externally administered without the power. Simplicity alone hath wisdom. Remember this. It is the truth now. The word of God is our duty, the acting on the word; the belief of the word is our distinctive salvation. The world shall know its truth when it comes to pass. Yet, saith He, I will make thee dumb before them; and we must be content with this often; yea, see the good of it; yet be faithful, and if faithful the Lord shall open our mouth

before them, and they shall know the truth of it, though they know it not as truth, that the Lord hath spoken.

There is further to remark on John viii., although the Lord refers to whence He came, and whither He went, to characterize fully the position and place of which He was witness on earth (and both were necessary to this, for He took man's place in it as going back). Yet after this, when speaking of His witness, He only refers to His coming from heaven, because He is the Word, and speaks the word of truth, and as such He comes from heaven. His connection with the Father is orderly brought out (16-18): "The Father that sent Me." If He judged (which He did not, but only witnessed, though His words were the same as the judgment), He judged just because He and His Father were there; but then as witness He is sent (His Father's was distinct); His words ever the expression of His very nature (that is the true sense of 25). He had heard them from His Father (26, 28) that the Father was with Him here; for He always did what pleased Him. But it was not only what He had heard of the Father, but what He had *seen* with Him. Thus He passes plainly to their true nature and paternity, while He honours the Father, and the Father honours Him; and He is "I AM." This blessed truth could be met only by enmity by those who there spoke with Him.

Further, remark that legalized men, even natural conscience, can judge the outward sin. This is what is

brought before us here, but as the Divine life in man would always feel what the world was, so Christ, in whom that Divine life was, made the opposite clearly manifest. He gives first by the Divine presence what is called its spirituality to the Law. As an outward system it was an arrangement to bring to light if flesh could be associated with God. But it contained the germ of what creation ought to be. The Divine presence gives power to this in the conscience, sanctions the judgment of evil, but makes all evil to be judged in the conscience, but judges now no man.

But then, if God be thus manifested, He is not to set up the mere claim of His Law on conscience. Being love, and the source of blessing, He could not merely do this; but He is the *light of life*. This, as we have seen, begins verse 12, and the word and witness of Christ as Divine and heavenly comes out, giving the light of life, according to the place He came from and went to. Then we have, as accessories, slavery to sin and slavery to the Law; the same thing, man being in flesh. This could not stay in the house; that is, in relationship with God. But truth and the Son would make free. The other point is that, though Abraham's seed according to the flesh, they were not Abraham's children. These accessory points bring the Lord, as He had first spoken of the direct source of blessing, to tell them plainly what they were.

Chapter IX.

Our Lord had spoken of Himself as the Light of the world, and the general results. Here we have the specific results on one blind from his birth. There we had it in simple testimony rejected; here in power of work. The veil is off the glory in Christ in testimony; *so* to all. It is on the heart, so that, save the power of the Spirit taking it off, revealing it still remains unseen. In the former chapter we have had the *word*, here the *work*, of Christ and the manner of the revealing.

The blindness from birth is too significant to need comment, but the Lord in the Remnant regarded it as no sin to be reckoned, nor as matter of sin reckoned, but as occasion of grace. This is the position in which (sovereign) grace views it. It was not judgment, "that." But as the fact were not so it was "that . . . should be manifested." This was the resulting point; then the exercise of power: "That the *works* of God should be made manifest *in him*." The light shone, yea, to all; but it was in darkness men hated the light; but the work was in him definite and effectual; grace that regarded its condition, and knew no cause but itself, as it were, and the fruits it was to produce, "that . . . should be manifested." This was the end, the sovereign acting of grace coming in, in the most helpless, when the sight of the world had rejected the Light of the world.

And here comes the distinctive character of Christ. He must needs do this; though He had been rejected by the world, still He must needs work the works of Him that sent Him, though He might have turned aside on the rejection of the world. The work of grace, as it were, all remained. Then in its place it began to work, the real work began to shew itself, the work of God in despite of the rejection of seeing man. Christ was a Servant in this work. Though the Light of the world, He did it as the Servant of the Father. He must needs work, but He must needs work while it is day. The day is the time of the presence of the light. But while Christ was in the world He was its Light. The night is His absence. We are not of the night, but of the day; but as being dead to the estate of Christ's absence, and believing in the light, having the light of life. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, says the Apostle. This, however, had its direct application to the Jews, with whom He was concerned in Person, yet so as that therein, as the Apostle ever carefully by the Spirit presents Him, as we have seen, He was the Light of the world. But this was an additional truth, and must be realized simply because of His Sonship, and because in Person He was paramount to the Jews, though subject in grace to the dispensations of God, and herein a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God. Not that this was of Moses, but of the fathers. Yet this subjection was the order of the ministration. But Christ's rejection was total night to them. We may, or they individually might, by the Spirit see Him by faith, and have the light of life. But the dim light

of the Law had ceased as to them in the rejection of Messiah, the end of the Law, and they were in pitch night, having neither Law nor Messiah, yet in responsibility in its highest estate. The world had rejected the Messiah, and though (the Light shining in darkness) He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, yet the world knew Him not. While He was in it He was the Light of *it*; and when He is in the world He must necessarily be the Light of it, though the glory of the Lord may rise upon Zion, and so it is the Lord's day. Nor till He be thus in the world in Zion will it be the day of the Lord, but then being that the glory is manifested it must be, so to speak, universal in the world, though its zenith may be in one spot; in it, however, in zenith, to one spot. Yet this only in dispensation; for it is in a higher character that He is the Light of the world. So that individually in respect of that higher glory it may be more felt and estimated by one far off than one near, though enjoying all its actual beams.

There is another remark which we may make, here. This chapter is not merely the contrast between the light as such, the public manifestation of which does but make the darkness more elaborately, manifestly dark (as sin, by the Law appearing sin, was exceeding sinful), and the work of Christ enlightening, causing to see, the light; but that also the seeing the effects of this did not influence those whose eyes were not opened to see the light itself. They remained closed to the evidence of the work of power giving light. As to the word which shone with the light in evidence of a similar case

of truth, see Luke viii. 27, and the following verses. A comparison of chap. xi. 9, 10 shews how much the Person of Jesus is concerned in this statement (*vv.* 4, 5), and shews how it leads us up to God. The comparison of the passages is full of deep instruction on this point. Nor is there any passage in which the Person of Jesus is more involved than in verses 4, 5. For while it was true only as Man, yet was true only also from His union with the Father in His Divine nature. In a word, it could be spoken only, as to this, as the Son. The service of the Lord, and yet His being Himself the Light, are distinctly and eminently brought forward, and this in the unity of His Person. The work which He worked was the exercise of Divine power. The position of the manifestation which He held was one liable to be extinguished, one of service, and one of which He bore testimony. Through this very liability, and its actual result, "the night cometh." Such is the perfectness of this Divine union. A service which, while it was all His glory, the very essential character of God was in Him, and by His grace to be exercised as their essential state by the Church; that is, the Apostles, etc.: "Ye are the light of the world."

It appears to me that in verses 6 and 7 we have that which is typical of the actual human nature of our Lord, and the knowledge by the power of the Holy Spirit that He was the Sent of God. What the work, then, of the opening of the eyes is, as contrasted with the coming of the Light, is manifest. First, presenting Him to the eye in the flesh, and the discovering Him to be the Son of God come in it ("Heareth My word, and believeth on

Him that sent Me"), the mission and the Person being identified in the discovery, for "the Father sent the Son." But the order of its acquisition is knowing the mission. The Holy Ghost sent is the witness of this to us. The result however was total and apparent change, so as to make doubt of the identity of his person; a change as assured in himself as it might be reasoned upon by unwilling speculatists. He knew he was the same, and he knew therefore he was changed.

They enquire the manner in which his eyes were opened. His answer shews to what extent he knew Jesus: "A Man that is called Jesus." His account gives the full synoptical account of the moral opening by which we see things as they are; for the Spirit without the flesh of Jesus could not shew us how things are, for we had not learnt death, nor what it was, but by Jesus's flesh; yet neither had we learnt it but by knowing He was the Son of God. Also these two things constitute all knowledge conferred on us by the sending of the Spirit as established in the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, the Son of Man. But as to his own progress in this he knew this only, the fact of the opening of his eyes by Jesus; and the conclusion he had to draw from this, as to the power in or permitted to Jesus, he was led by the operation of this to believe His word as from God.

This was the point which we saw rejected in the former chapter. The exercise of the work of grace results primarily in reception of His word. He knew in this sense He was from God. So the Jews in reply rest in fact on the denial of this: "We know that

God spoke by Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence He is."

This was the differential point of faith; this was the work from the outset; acting on the word of Jesus was its primary form, which is its primary work; that is, in grace and theme, having, in opened eyes, the full conviction of the power in which He came and spake, even of God; hence taking His word as God's, conclusive, knowing Him as a Prophet. So the woman of Samaria, then differently intended. Thus far Jesus was revealed to this man, to the crowd (not the Pharisees), distinguished as we have seen before.

This gave occasion of enquiry and curiosity. But it was the revelation of grace which is here distinguished. The man could lead them no farther. Hence they lead him to the Pharisees, whose different state we have seen before, wherein we have the contrast of regard for external ritual and renewal in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. A blind Pharisee that sees things as they are outwardly is an easy thing to make; seeing indeed, but with the eyes of the enemy, and therefore perverting all things. The difficulty however was obvious, for the miracle was plain.

The Pharisees repeated the question, and the answer was briefly, but bearing the whole truth, repeated. It was brought in its moral force, with the recognition of His Person by the multitude, to the wise Pharisees; as before [to] the unlettered, but therefore less darkened, multitude. We may observe the simple fact is mentioned here, for in discussing it the question of the Siloam, as it were, is not yet entered on. It was the fact, the work;

this was before them; not the understanding of the mystery now before us: "*He* put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and do see." The external worship of God seems but to blind those who have not the power of grace. But the fact pressed them, and they recur to the judgment of the man. Hence we have brought out in its detail the workings of unbelief of the natural mind judging about Christ, conscious that those to whom they were tied had agreed to reject Him as inconsistent with their system. But natural convictions pressing hard on such are open evidence of Divine power; and unwilling that this should be without them, rather than have the credit of it for themselves, as feeling as they must its credit, yea, seeing it with the people, they seek to find some loop-hole in the account of the man himself, leaving it open to him entirely.

During the development of all this the Lord stands by; the work, indeed, being real and His in the man, but left *to its results*, and apparently without support in the trial and manifestation of what is real. In the man's testimony we have the distinct evidence of the progress of his soul, or of the Divine work upon it, in knowledge: "He is a Prophet." The work is in the believer, and he knows it; but the evidence of the work in another is alike ineffectual as the word, though it be the evidence of the power of that word. "If I had not *come*" (that is, in the flesh), "and spoken unto them" (in which however His words were not His own in the flesh but His Father's, who says He doeth the works), "they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin." For this adequately exposed it to their consciences.

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." As it is said therefore here, for this chapter is on the works, not the word simply, and brought before them in the evidence of the object of it: "Since the world began was it not heard that any one opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

So all this discussion was just to bring out the evidence of the work in its full external force; and all the réasonings of men upon the subject did but bring this out more. The evidence was applied to their judgment, responsible human judgment, and this was in exercise in their reasoning, bringing their responsibility into direct, wilful exercise. They would have sought (for unbelief is long uneasy, though it dislike to receive the thing to be believed) to have found refuge for it in the fact possibly not being true of his previous state. The parents set aside all ground for their doubt in unequivocal testimony, while they leave their unbelief to work itself out. It was indeed, they knew, settled; they had agreed beforehand. But it was thrown upon this: their unbelief was left without excuse (an important point) on the ground on which they rested, to which they had been reduced, wholly without excuse. They were thrown upon the judgment of him who was healed, if they would have any. In a word, they had nothing more to say. They had confessed the miracle and work, if he were so born blind. It appeared on the testimony they had looked to that he was. How it came about they might ask the subject of it.

But the point of unbelief was now complete. They recognized the miracle, while they denied it in the enquiry of the parents. This is the point to which we have him here point, the miracle elaborately ascertained to unbelief, exhibiting deliberate determination to reject Jesus in rejecting him on whom the work was wrought, because he owned Him, as His disciple. The work of the Lord, its effect on the people, the manifestation of unbelief connected with self-righteousness on the presenting, in the subject of it, the full effect in perception of His power, but so as not to give offence even to them, assorted to their prejudices: "He is a Prophet." Then the acting of this unbelief manifested, and of Jesus on the other hand, as to this same individual. "They called the man" (they would act forth on this blindness of seeing unbelief), "the second time who was blind, and said, Give God the praise" (a great miracle has indeed been done, they knew he must feel it; at any rate, they were too prudent to resist this, but would bring in their authority to bury the manner); "*we* know"; (you indeed see the miracle, but we, who have larger, fuller means of judging, for the pronoun is inserted), "*we* know that this Man," we know Him, He "is a sinner." I, says the poor man, do not know that; that certainly is a knowledge I have not got; but one thing I do know (there was the consciousness of the real possession of a substantial truth, the experience of the power in his own person): being blind I now see.

This baffled the Jews. They say, What did He do? They recognize the miracle, but enquire the manner how. But the point was the exercise of power that faith

discerned. It was the one thing the poor man knew. He had told them indeed the manner before; but the thing his mind rested on was the manifest effect of power; he was blind, and saw experimental effect. As to this point the manner was immaterial, quite immaterial when they owned the power. It was the imbecility of unbelief; he felt it was. I told you, said the poor man, and then (when it was to the purpose as the object of interest and news for faith,) ye did not hear; are ye in earnest in what ye say? Why do ye want to hear again, as ye see the miracle? Do ye wish to become His disciples? It was forcing them to the real point of their unbelief; a just reproach.

It is remarkable, too, how they rest in their existing knowledge; he on the evidence, present evidence, of God in the thing. Yet observe that their unbelief might be without excuse on the commonest reasoning on their own principles, Jewish principles. Their unbelief was in separating God and Jesus. This was wilful, on the evidence. The resting on old principles merely, or old teaching, though right so as to be its disciples merely, where new power is exhibited, is the form of unbelief: "Thou art His disciple; we are *Moses' disciples*"; though if they had received what God *did say* by Moses, instead of merely the *credit of the association*, they would have believed in Jesus as the Christ, for he spake of Him; but the discipleship in credit of the association is unbelief, the rejection of God, then as now, as the Lord before. It hangs too, as it ever does after all, in their knowledge or authority; therefore, "We know that God spake to Moses" ("we know

that this Man is a sinner"). As generally received as an honour it required no faith to own this. "As to this Man, we know not whence He is." There was exactly the point of faith. It was the full confession of their own utter ignorance in the whole vital point of the whole question, but accepting themselves, *the point they set out from*, a full reason for rejecting Him; yet still in condemnation, for if they knew not whence, it might be after all from God; for their knowledge that He was a sinner had no real place in their consciences. It was the full confession of their ignorance *on the subject*, their own condemnation; but, I say, accepting themselves a just ground to their mind for rejecting Him.

But the man had a ground to rest on their unbelief deprives them of. He meets them on the point of their knowledge or ignorance by the certainty of the fact *on their own principles*. The plain reasoning of faith is most sure and conclusive. It is the work of God to give the faith, but faith sees on God's principles the full force of the moral reasoning of God's acts which unbelief sees not, though fully responsible for; for while faith recognizes grace exclusively to itself, it vindicates the evidence of God in that act of grace incontrovertibly, and makes the rejection of Jesus not merely the rejection of grace, though it is so, but the rejection of that very perfect righteousness which it assumingly requires, and that in reality and not in form. The point brought their unbelief clearly to the poor man's mind, making their authority though painful yet immaterial, for it is the rejection of their unbelief: "Herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not whence He is, and yet" (which

they acknowledge as a fact) "He hath opened mine eyes." And then, while their not drawing the conclusion was their condemnation, he reasons on their own acknowledged principles, turns Jew with them: "*We know* that God heareth not sinners," etc. We know these principles. Here is a miracle without parallel, a great work. "If this Man were not of God," for the conclusions of faith are positive, "He could do nothing."

Answer they could give none, but seal their own condemnation; they were rejecting, not the man, but the counsel of God against themselves, the work of God, the evidence of His word and its power. It was still upon the pride of knowledge, though in the act of ignorance: "Dost thou teach us?" He was not born in sin, but that grace should be shewn in him, the works of God should be manifested. They were utterly ignorant of the whole order of God's counsels in grace. But further, if he had been born in sins, the sovereignty and power of that work of grace was only the more conspicuous, and their condemnation the greater. The rejection of a work of grace is darkness as to the only character of God which can rescue *us*, and at the same time of the fullest evidence. It is in some sort more than evidence of the operation and truth of that. It is, looked at in this light, as left on this ground, a hopeless case.

After the evidence of the development of the workings of unbelief in presence of the manifested work of God by Jesus, and their summary turning out by selfishness (though recognizing the work, for he was there before them with the power of the work recognized in him,

faith shewn as flowing from the work in the man, not before him, though that shewed perfect responsibility), we have Jesus acting His receptive part, not on the multitude, the Jews, but on these even by their unbelief shewing itself on the manifestation of the power of His voice in them. Cast out, it was the leading forth of the sheep, as therein by power of grace distinguished from the mass. It has been a bringing, through testimony to all, and the manifestation of the work of power in some, through and out of the apostasy of the body, brought into manifestation by that testimony and work, and therefore whose form was in respect of it. But this is the case of positive reception of one (of the sheep) out of that which formally claimed the righteousness of God by Him who really was it, their apostasy being exhibited in the rejection. Yet the follower of Jesus was right, independent of the rejection, though there were [those] who were left to be rejected for the faith of Jesus, through His power manifested in them, that the apostasy might be manifested. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out." He did not act till the full manifestation of his faith and their unbelief had been drawn out, and therein their apostasy and his being of the sheep; for he was placed in a very trying position, yet the simplicity of faith made it easy. And finding him He said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Here was the point of saving, vivifying *recognition*, that in which he was instituted a disciple within the Kingdom, associated formally with the life-giving power, brought into unison with that in which the inheritance was.

Perhaps the expression "vivifying recognition" might

mislead. The truth is, up to this point the whole had been upon Jewish grounds. It was a sheep drawing out of the Jewish fold, owning Him when the body rejected Him, and so being brought to Him as having those greater and not derivative privileges which He had as Son of God, of which as we have seen this Gospel of John is the testimony. Hence the confession of the poor man was, "A Man that is called Jesus made clay," etc., "and I see." "What sayest thou of Him?" "He is a Prophet." Thus he had owned His work as a Jew, and the Jews rejected Him in the way in which He was appropriated to them, and so reveals Himself to the man cast out for so recognizing Him, in the power of that character in which He was to gather into His glory, into association with Him, those who should believe on Him, whether Jew or Gentile, but identifying himself definitely with Him whom he *had* seen and who was then talking with him. The very rejection of the Jews, by dislocating his associations from the forms in which Messiah was previously to appear, set him on the readiness of enquiry to a new object; not object, but association and form, order, of faith: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" The door of faith was opened in his heart by trust in the word of Jesus; and the abstract object being presented, the character and power with which he was to be associated, the recompense, so to speak, of his exclusion, his enquiry, from Him whose word he had learned to trust by the work wrought in him, is, "Who is He, Lord, that I may?" Then comes what is universally the great point, the Siloam point, the recognition of Him as come whose power we have known,

whose interference we have known, whom we have felt delivering us, that this Person is the Son of God. There was full recognition of the authority of Jesus. The point was his identity with the Saving Man. So Paul: "Who art Thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus." The glory was plain. He calls Him Lord, seeing His glory. The Lord's answer is, "I am Jesus." So here: "Who is the Son, Lord?" "Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee." The identity was the great point of comfort. He found, in Him on whose authority he had been turned out of the synagogue, the very Son of God, on whom all his hopes should be set, the new and glorious character he was to find. Oh, happy hour which has revealed the glory of that Son setting us in the place of sons, and finding that it was Jesus that had cared for, considered, and been the Servant of our sorrows, through whom we had first found our sight, the Servant of God!

But it was acting faithfully on his light (from God), in spite of the world, that he found the blessing, this full resting-place of blessing. And he said, "I believe, Lord." Here then is the point of belief. Till we know the Sonship in the Person of Jesus it is, "Who is He, Lord?" Then this is He, one with you. The Sonship in Jesus is the point, the meeting-point of faith: "And he worshipped Him." Nothing can be more simple or beautiful than this development of faith, and the record of our Lord's labours in thus saving the Remnant who did not deny His name. The whole scene is most instructive. The comparison of Matt. xi. with this is evident. The comment of our Lord needs no comment.

Only practically we may remark that responsibility rests on the assumption of knowledge, the pretension to Church position. Whoever holds this says, We see, and is responsible for the rejection of that which is of God.

But God had this in His own keeping. They rejected, indeed, to their own judgment. But, though this were so, God had a way of His own, a Porter of His own, a place of His own. What they were rejecting was, not Christ, but themselves.

The Lord (what follows is addressed to them, to shew them they were not rejecting Him but sealing their own judgment, not those who turned the man out, but still the Pharisees as a set of people) opens out to them this in the passage which follows, the whole process of His service (compare Isa. xlix.). This we will follow, God's resulting place for this whole matter, and solemn account to those sheep-rejecting, yea, but Christ- and therefore self-rejecting Pharisees. It was the secret of their state, and awful, most awful word to them, specially as seeing the unfolding of the truth: "For judgment am I come," the result of "I came not to judge."

Chap. vii. is the proposal to show Himself to the world, and the gift of the Spirit (the great boon on the Lord's departure) being necessarily connected with His disconnection with the Jews has its proper sphere in the world. Jesus was the Passover. The Spirit, though revealing the glory, was in a certain sense instead of Him as a Comforter to His people, and dealing with the world. The same thing in a measure applies to

viii. and ix., one being contrast with the Law; the other, removal of natural blindness; though it was found really none was blind like His Servant. The strictest Jew was blind, though he said he saw; so that his sin remained. A Jew's eyes, of course, would be opened; but it was, as a sinner, blind.

The sin of rejection in word and work in John viii. and ix. has been noted elsewhere. But there is more. In viii. we have simply light (Christ) in the world; God Himself, who is light; the Light of the world; but, as the Lord said, the darkness comprehended it not. It is simple darkness, but shewing itself in hatred against the truth. In ix. we have the contrast of a rejected Christ, looking, though in it, to His going out of it: "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world"; but the action of the Spirit and word on the closed heart in shewing truth first (a Prophet), and then the Son of God in the lowly Man who, to nature, was but clay upon the eyes, is given in ix.; and though souls were thus given to see, as in the case here, yet the operation of the Spirit of God leading to own Him as the Sent One is clearly intimated; and that was consequent on His rejection. I add here that the Church was set in a different position. Christ was the Light of the world, but still known as the Sent One from the Father. All was blindness. He was clay upon blind eyes. But when the disciples were, when the light of the world, to be as a city set upon a hill (as the Lord says, what He had spoken in the ear they were to pro-

claim upon the house-tops), the Holy Spirit was not receivable in the world as the Son ought to have been received, but the effect of His presence was public. It was not a dove, but tongues of fire. Christ's voice was not lifted up in the streets; only gentleness in His personal work till He sends forth judgment; but in the testimony about Him, Wisdom was to lift up her voice in the streets, and cry aloud. "We cannot but speak," say the Apostles.

Chapter X.

In fact, the tenth chapter of John should begin at the thirty-ninth verse of chapter ix. This is the connecting clause with the matter which we have been considering in the ninth; and verse 1 begins His exposition of the general truth or principle addressed to these Pharisees: "Verily, verily, I say unto you." It was addressed specifically to them, and began relative to the Jews, His assertion that He had entered in exactly according to the ordinance of God. The testimony to all had been given. He had not shunned to declare God's righteousness in the great congregation; that is, the whole assembly of the Jews; as He says, "O Lord, Thou knowest." The evidence had been given by the

works, many good works, He had fulfilled; in a word, every witness of His mission and Person from God (as indeed His unity with the Father) had been rejected generally, now specifically. They had (saw that, had cognizance intelligently in their own estimation of these things,) refused the evidence. But His real comfort in doing His Father's will remained. He had entered in by the door. *He was the Shepherd of the sheep.* But He opens this out in all its bearings most beautifully, as filling up the required ground, prescribed ground, of entrance, so as to be recognized by the Porter, the sovereignty of God by the Spirit, and being also the door out into the real fold. This was the most terrible word to them. The entrance in of the sheep or others (Gentiles) was not unto them the *aulee* (fold); but He rejected was the door for the sheep out of that into the *poimnee* (flock), the real fold.

—1. Note, the former part of this Gospel clearly displays that on our Lord's first coming His object was to save and not to judge; and therefore as to the world it is only the call of the gospel. As it is written: I came not to judge the world, but that the world through Me might be saved. And again, What have I to do to judge them that are without? Them that are without God judgeth.

But real believers erring from the path of faith God judges here, that they may not be condemned with the world. Further, as to the visible Church the evil is ever mingled with the good; as our Lord prophetically wills: Let both grow together until harvest. [That was the world, not the Church]. They therefore grievously

err who propose to separate the elect in a visible Church, and act independently of the Lord's will, therefore in fact in disobedience; which therefore, so far from being a just judgment, is the object of judgment itself. In truth I can suppose nothing more contrary to the will of God as displayed in this and other scriptures. [True as to the elect; but, while the Lord knows His own, we are to judge them that are within: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."] In result, however, it is in its operation separative, though not in the exercise of judgment (compare and study Malachi iii. 16, 17, 18). And thus the Lord is come into the world "for judgment," in that, although He came not to condemn the world, but to save it, yet, having come to save, the perfect manifestation of God in the flesh, as God had promised afore of the holy prophets since the world began, witnessed both by the Law and the prophets, "he that believeth not is condemned already."

Having stated therefore that He was come "for judgment," the Lord shews how His work is wholly a work of love, a calling the sheep, and exercising the work of a shepherd; still all love, for even if they must be chastened it is "whom He loveth He chasteneth"; "for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness." But His sheep hear His voice, and follow Him, to make room for judgment where love has had no work, the call being unattended to.

Then comes judgment on the Jews, as now a carcase, when the Son of Man came; all the cities of Israel having been gone through, and the gospel

preached to the four winds to found a new system. The same we are assured will take place by the preaching of the gospel, and is in fact so by His word in the Revelation and elsewhere: A voice from heaven, Come out of her; and then, In one hour thy judgment is come. And this is the uniform tenor of God's work in the world; the Flood, Sodom, etc. Here apply the principle of Peter: Judgment begins at the house of God, and what shall the end be of those that obey not the gospel? Note, therefore, as to ministry. Therefore the work is always wholly and merely love, and nothing else; and eldership or judgment applies in its exercise by men solely to him within. The judgment to come is declared as a part of the work of love, saying, Flee from it; if not, ye will die in your sins. See besides the instances in the Old Testament, and the whole ministry of our Lord, the twelve Apostles, and the general history from the beginning of His ministry to the destruction of Jerusalem, as pourtrayed in His prophecy [Matt. xxiv., xxv.]; and then Revelation xviii. and xix. And note here Peter's laying the foundation of the Gentile Church; Paul's history, and non-permission to preach in Jerusalem; and the silence of Scripture as to the ministry of the other Apostles in Gentile countries; though it appears they did; the addresses of the Epistles with, if Paul were the author of Hebrews, the absence of his name. The case of Matthias may also be enquired into.

I suppose that whereinsoever we may judge we shall find "Tamar is more righteous than I." One there was who, as fulfilling the place of man with the perfection of God, might say, "Yet, if I judge, My judgment is just";

yea, although the Father judged no man, but had committed all judgment to the Son, yet judged no man, as a perfect example of the children of God here. As the Word of God He was the witness of God; so are the children who have the testimony of Jesus.

Let us proceed to the detail of the verses. I tell you Pharisees, I open to you the truth: You have rejected Me, corporately, intelligently. I will open to you the sad truth: "He that entereth not in by the door," by the prescribed order of God's entrance into the sheep-cote or yard. Christ had fulfilled perfectly, had met, every requisition, subjected Himself to the inspection of the Porter, and the vigilant eye of the Spirit could have found nothing in which God was not well pleased, the perfectness (as indeed He was the True One, and so formally evinced), of every character and circumstance scripturally ordered and pointed out by which Messiah should be recognized. He came to the right place of the scrutiny of His character. It was to the "fold of the sheep," where the vigilance of God would be exercised, the full opportunity of scrutiny afforded by "seeing," which the taught (intellect) of God could exercise, according to that. This was all that could be required. But then it discovered, though formally so, there even then those not recognizing Him, not sheep (they heard His voice), they were properly the inmates, it was (which note) "the fold of the sheep" it belonged to them properly. Within, or attempting to get in, in whatever character but by other ways, other means, of influence over the sheep, so as to be there, they were thieves or robbers This applied to all pretending to lead the

people; as He says, "Three shepherds . . . in one month"; specifically, of course, to any assuming the name of Messiah. But whoever was in the fold not being sheep, and not being Christ, whoever was not subject to Messiah's voice (for thus it was manifested), they, it was clear, must be separate, independent, seek to lead against it; they were thieves and robbers. If they were not Messiah, nor sheep, who or what were they? If they did not hear Messiah, they were not sheep. This therefore, that is, His coming and speaking, was the separative point. The works indeed they saw condemnatorily in evidence. But the "voice" is the separative power. This it is the saints, the sheep, hear; the others not. The works are but directed condemnation; it put them into the character of "entereth not," though they might seem hitherto to be "sheep," or led them as shepherds; or rather they were "he that entereth not by the door." They were not sheep, for they did not hear. They were put into the character of "climbeth up some other way," who even does not come to God's place, so that a testimony to the Gentiles would not have done. He must come not merely "to the sheep" but "to the fold of the sheep," and so be subject to scrutinized conformity to God's way, and so come in, etc.

The sentence negatives all but One, who is exactly the Person, the Messiah, "Shepherd." No matter what other way he comes or gets at the "fold" he is a thief and a robber. For instance, I believe Antichrist will more specifically fulfil this than any one else. He, I believe, will come "to the fold" (Jerusalem, the Jewish people), but he will arise in the power of the Gentiles,

not in anywise "by the door"; although it was true of our Lord in Person, as He was evincing Himself, or stating the principles of the subject, which shewed them defenceless, and made the separation. He rests it on the evidence of His character: "He that entereth in by the door." He is recognized by God. The Spirit of God, the controlling authority of God, opens the door of access into the fold. They took away keys of knowledge, and thought to hinder the Shepherd as an intruder. But there was a Porter, One who had power and title to open, who knew the Shepherd. Whatever they did, and would give Him who was so, Him who met and manifested all the requisitions of the Shepherd, "to Him *the Porter* openeth," the real Porter. Where we really meet, and in proportion as we really meet, the requisitions of God, the Spirit of God will surely open access to the sheep. Others perhaps, for the same reason, because they are not recognized as the porters, will reject. "And the sheep hear His voice." Equally certain is this result. This is a matter of fact, looked at as to them as within the fold. There they hear His voice. The fact is stated as a result as to their position. This is when He comes into the fold speaking.

The next point is His personal acting towards the sheep. He came into the fold, and spoke. The effect we have seen in the history of our Lord. Then comes still the certain, real, resulting office: "He calleth His own sheep by name." There is specific appropriation, and He calls them by name, as knowing them. The Shepherd being the doer of it knoweth them that are His. The object is to bring them forth out of it. He enters

into the "fold," but it is not the "flock." The sheep in the "fold" hear His voice; then He calleth them by name, and leadeth them forth out of it. The reference of this to the Jews, and our Lord's present position as rejected, is manifest. "He leadeth them forth." He must authoritatively put His sheep forth. His own sheep cannot be allowed to stay there. When He thus casts them out, puts them forth, He goes before them.

The point He brings them to is painful expulsion. It is His doing. He "puts them forth." We are ever fearful of doing this. The Lord has His own way of doing it. "*He goeth before them.*" He was the first rejected of the *ekballomenoi*, yet it was indeed in one sense His own doing, the necessary result of His moral presenting Himself to the unbelieving body disowning God; and the sheep follow Him, for thus they knew their path. They knew His voice in the fold. When He goes forth it was "He putteth forth." To Him too, though going knowingly forth; they "follow Him; for they know His voice." They know it is His voice. They learnt it (through grace) when He spake in the fold. His business with His own sheep is to put them out. This is appropriating: "the sheep follow Him" is the character. He knows them personally, "by name." Besides, in His case, they are His own. This is true, properly speaking, of none else. So He says, "Feed *My* sheep." Though it would seem that in some sort there was appropriate Judaism. He was the Apostle of the circumcision. There is generic result afterwards; sheep not put forth, but brought in, but to the same

"flock," but the point of the putting forth and following is acquaintance with Him personally by His word: they know *His voice*. Consequently, a stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him. And here is the safety of the sheep. The voice is the separating power, because it is voice. Those within the fold may call the sheep forth, as though they were the Shepherd; but they have not the voice of the Shepherd. Now, all their defence is in the Shepherd, and therefore when they hear the voice they flee from it, and the effort of the stranger proves but the protection of the sheep. We may note the Shepherd's voice is the security of the sheep, for it implies personal knowledge of Him, and this leads to the knowledge of the Person. It is not the fold, nor where they enter in being thus put forth, but the Shepherd's voice. Consequently others' voice makes them fly, for they have no strength in themselves, and therefore the voice of others alarms them; it is a stranger. All is identified with them with the voice of Jesus. Their distinction is knowing His voice, and following *Him*.

They understood not the parable, though Jesus spoke it to them. Immediately concerned in the things He said, they did not know what the things were about which He was speaking to them. The Lord was speaking about the position in which His sheep were, and into which they were brought. Yet the parable was addressed to them. He told them what He was doing with the sheep. He might have left this untold to them, as those who had slighted, or shut their eyes to, the light, Him as the Light. But here we have not

anger. He told them the things, and if understood there was in them that which was calculated to make them very displeased, more than all yet. But they did not know what the things were which He told them. He addressed Himself to them as before: "Verily, verily." Our Lord opened it out therefore farther, addressing Himself still to them: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

This is a new light in which He puts Himself, but it fills up the other. It is also simple and more decided. They did not understand how He came in by the door, nor what the thing meant. Now He tells them what remains. He had entrance into the fold. The sheep, indeed, heard Him, but none else. Now, He was the door of the sheep, the door out, a door by which they might get out of the fold, when His voice led out. But He was the door generally to the sheep, the appointed way of access. He came in by the door, and therefore was the door. That is, He, and He alone, came in by God's appointed way, and therefore was God's appointed way to others (the sheep). None, indeed, else could come to that door. He was the *door of the sheep.*

He was the door. Thus far then was the path or the way marked. They were right; assured thus far. This was most important. "To a land that I will shew thee." The "I" was the security, the point of faith; the "shew thee" the promise. So here: "*I am* the door." Where or what the fold would be was not yet shewn. But He *was* the door of the sheep. As He came in fulfilling the way, He was their way out. Still the Person, and personal

care, of the Shepherd was the security, and thus shewn.

"All that ever came before Me were thieves and robbers." They did not come in by the door; they were robbers of the fold itself; "but the sheep did not hear them." Their character was known *by* their character. Now, asserting Himself in Person to be the door that the sheep had to do with, the door of the sheep (for on His rejection He would have the sheep forth out of a condemned fold, a fold whose character was exhibited in His rejection), He declares necessarily, "All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers." They are not Him, and He is the door of the sheep, whom God owned. No matter who they were who claimed cognizance of the sheep, that is what they are, for He is the Shepherd, the door: "All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers." But they had none of the sheep, whatever injury they might have done to the fold. The sheep (that is a blessed truth,) did not hear them. But besides, He was the door of the sheep; but He *was* the door: "By Me, if *any man enter in.*" Neither is the where yet developed; but Himself (which was the only real security of anything, specially of place or sheep), He was the door. He did not say "out," for the sheep were the real people; it was not to leave the fold. He was the door of the fold itself. Of the "fold" the in and out was in Him. But "in" He does say, because they who were not in this "fold" might hereby come in.

Nothing can be more beautifully accurate than our Lord's words here, as we might look for

indeed, but accurate in the depth of their moral instruction. But He states it generally. He is centring their thoughts in Himself as the door. "If any man come in by Me." For coming in by the door he was no thief nor robber; hence the opening for the Gentiles; for Christ was the door to them in the "fold"; therefore as the door also he that passed by Him recognized God's appointed way. He came in by that which justified his entrance; for Christ [was] the door of the sheep, by whom they must find really entrance. Therefore he who found entrance by the same found the same justification of his conduct, as he who also had no other warrant for his conduct than that He was the door. Therefore he came out. The same had the entering in; he came through Him, the door. Thus the Gentile was fully and co-equally justified, but here as conversant about the door. It is merely "any one": "he shall be saved." That was the point, the distinctive point of entering in. It was not so in the "fold." A man might be there, and not saved; very far from it; quite the opposite. Certainly a mere outer Gentile was not saved. But the first point here is "saved": "by Me . . . . any one."

Further, we have evidence of the personal care of Christ, and hence liberty. It was not the close system of restrictive Judaism, nor the outer state of unadmitted Gentilism, barred by the middle wall of partition; but being in the Person of Christ they had liberty. They were called unto liberty, because therein is security, and hence found pasture; wherever God had shewed the good fields of His food there they went. The Lord Most High, moreover, would lead them there. However,

there they might go. It was the order of Christ: "They shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." If it is by Christ we enter in we shall have this. Not having this is not of Christ. All ordinances which do not carry this are not standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. This is Christ's order. The door was the appointed way. The appointed way is *the way to be saved*, the way to go in and out, and so find pasture. It is *the order of the Spirit.* It is, has, its opportunity of feeding (for indeed herein the Lord is that Spirit) and Christ never can be the door to entering into evil. God forbid! Christ, let Him free ever so much, frees for the feeding of green pastures, holiness of truth; and is not, and never was, a cloak of licentiousness. Man and Satan may use anything for that bondage, as well as liberty. It is the liberty of being always led of Christ, free from sin.

But at present He is on the salvation and liberty. Its connection with the Person of Christ is, in fact, shewn in the next verse. Salvation and liberty we have seen, now life. "The thief" (all else were so,) "cometh not, save to steal, and kill, and destroy." It was for himself, not the sheep, he came. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." They were sheep who were alive within the fold, but their life was feeble and restrained. They longed for this liberty of life (so now Messiah, when He comes, shall give it more abundantly, give liberty to them in bondage, glorious liberty to the children of God). The rest were dead, unquickened, along with those who should never hear (His voice). He does not specifically

say *sheep* here; "any one" was the last position we had. He came that they might have life (if alive at all, in expectation of Him,) more abundantly, and the dead ones live; for to the sheep only in fact would it be so. The quickening voice was to all; it quickened the sheep alone; and He came to quicken them. Here then the Shepherdhood came in. It was over the quickened ones. Here it had its place.

Our Lord having exhibited Himself in all the previous characters, and now giving life, more abundant life, now constitutes Himself the Shepherd, the Good Shepherd. This is in contrast to the thief. Our Lord was then the Good Shepherd. He was so in Person. He had come that they might have life, and He was their Shepherd when quickened. But He was so when in the flesh: "Of those which Thou hast given Me I have lost none," etc. When they were quickened, He, the life-giving Lord, was their Shepherd, the sheep's Shepherd. But He was the Good Shepherd in the flesh: "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." They were now brought into contradistinction with the inhabitants of the fold at large (that is, in this chapter), and were in imminent danger. But there was One that stood before them in it. There were others, thieves. He speaks of character; but the grand fulfilment was the antichristian power of Satan.

I am inclined to think that this applies rather to Gog, I mean in character. The idol shepherd of Zech. xi. is, I should think, however, the Antichrist as in his connection with the Jewish people. Compare that prophecy; it is most important. His object was to steal, etc., even

as to the fold, which shews (though specifically resulting in the sheep) the generic character of the one there. He could not touch the sheep. He had no life to give. It was the contrast of the object and the existing state; not of the objects of application; though, if followed out, this was in result, as to the life, the sheep only. This would be most fully shewn in Antichrist himself. The Good Shepherd was shewn in His own trial and difficulty. He laid down His life, His own life, for the sheep (whencesoever though as yet only known amongst the Jews). This is in faithfulness of love adverted to here, not in power of atonement; though it included that. It is the Shepherd, the Good Shepherd; not the Lamb. He was Shepherd when alive, and then laid down His life for the sheep.

Now we have another character, "the hireling"; not the thief (Antichrist, see above), but the hireling. He is not shepherd, but he has the sheep under his care. This is an awful state of things. The sheep are not his. He is there for the gain from the sheep. He acts from this view, not from care for the sheep (see Zech. xi.). The fold is in his power, and the sheep are merely the most helpless part of his prey. Still, it is not the wolf. It is nominally the shepherd, but is not, but is a hireling. "He sees the wolf coming, and fleeth." The nominal shepherdhood of the Church has had this character, not in its devouring, but in its unfaithful character. If they have not been thieves, they have been "hirelings." Caring for the fold is nothing; it is caring for the sheep, because they are His sheep, that marks the true, the Good Shepherd. "Therefore," says Paul also, "there-

fore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." This is the spirit exactly of the Shepherd. The fold He did care for as nominally the sheep; the world He did care for as ostensibly the objects of His love, and so exercised; but not knowing, rejecting, the Father. He, faithful in love, in spite of the rejection of the world, went through all this rejection to the uttermost that He might have the sheep. "I endure all things for the elect's sake" is the spirit just of a Christian. The wolf's care was against the sheep. They were his prey. The hireling cared not for them, and therefore the moment they were in question (not gain) fled. There was no concern with him about the sheep. That was the mark of Christ's soul. "The wolf seizeth them, and scattereth the sheep."

It is remarkable that it is not said that he devoureth or destroyeth them. Nor indeed does he. But he does seize and scatter them. But where is the shepherd? Oh! here is the awful state, where the sheep are, through their admixture in the fold, their love of the world, under the hireling. It is a state supposed by the Lord, and these are moral characters, and may be traced. Wherever they can be traced it is an abstract consideration of the moral character from the conduct, without reference to the circumstances where it may be found, and hence the more morally perfect. But he is "a hired servant," and not "shepherd." He that is the one is not the other; morally, I mean. There is this peculiar, and felt too, in the character: "whose own the sheep are not"; felt where the Spirit of Christ is.

But the Good Shepherd is behind. Yet rejected, dead, risen though He be into far distant glory, the scattering of the wolf has not hidden them from His eye, or made them strangers to the care of Him who laid down His life for them, be it ever so toilsome. Blessed be His name! He was the Good Shepherd, as living, of the sheep called to know Him. He laid down His life for the sheep. These were hirelings, then and onward, who did not care for the sheep; though, whether among Jews or afterwards, and again among the Jews (in the Lord's absence) over the fold. For this is the order.

Note, he leaves the sheep. He does not necessarily leave the fold; but he leaves the sheep, because they are the objects of the wolf. Nevertheless, the sheep as to the then fold are supposed to be under personal care. Therefore when "the hireling" fleeth they are scattered. This, as we have said, is in the Lord's absence. *Nevertheless*, meanwhile He is the Good Shepherd, and (though risen and ascended) knows His sheep, and is known of them. Yea, though it were so before, yet it was now hidden; it was in trial, perfectly indeed, still not in the bright view in which we see Him now. Both are perfect, but it is in this character as thus exalted that He says, "I know My sheep, and am known of Mine." It is His special characteristic as the exalted Shepherd. They heard His voice. He called them by name (see John i. 42-47), and leadeth them forth. Now as exalted, as the Shepherd, He knows (which is the material point, a point we might be uncertain about,) His own, and is known of them; and this in connection with and according

to that testimony, Divine testimony, of knowledge in which the Father knoweth Him and He knoweth the Father.

At first I had thought that this passage ran, "As I know and am known as," etc. That it has an unexpressed association of this kind I believe. Compare the unities mentioned in John xvii.

But I think there is something further in it, our Lord acting and presented in and loving as a Man (the representative of God). The world might seem to have a mind, an intention different from the Father. As a Man He did genuinely love the world, and so did God. But He has now introduced Himself in His Christhood, His exaltation after His death, in headship. He speaks of it in the flesh now, because it is always true in His Person. But He is speaking in the Spirit, prophetically (so to speak) thus; and He has full unity [with], though distinction from, the Father's mind. As the Father knows Him, so He knows the Father, and He lays down His life for the sheep. He had the same identity of purpose, and entered into the Father's mind here (whose the sheep were, and who gave them to Him), knew it as the Father knew Him.

This, I think, is included in it, and is a most important point when connected with the love to the world in which He did God's will, who *is* also love. Unity in knowledge and purpose here, which could only be in equality; or rather, for that supposes separation, identity in union; unity in nature and power afterwards, with the Persons kept distinct in both. The doctrine also is very important. As to the structure of the passage it might run as marked by the asterisk, but you may refer to John xv. 9,

xvii. 16. The sheep is the point. They are elect; *recognized* the sheep. As yet they were recognized only within the Jewish fold, because there only the Shepherd ministered. He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. There only was the recognition. The Person was always the same. Therefore, in the Holy Ghost, as knowing the Father as known, He could recognize that which could be attributed to the Person (which was His in office).

Having now viewed Himself as the Shepherd in His exalted position, He looks at those belonging to Him as thus the exalted Shepherd, confirming I think distinctly the distinct positions of the office and order of the passage as followed here: "And other sheep I have" (of the Gentiles), "who are not of this [Jewish] fold," the "fold" in which He then was: "them also I must" (it was an obligation on Him of His Father, and the dueness of His own love,) "bring," not "lead out," as before as to the Jews, or sheep among them at least: "and they shall hear My voice"; it is Christ's voice now, "therefore," "turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven"; "and there shall be one" (not *aulee*, "fold") *poimnee*, "flock, and one Shepherd," to wit, the Church and Christ.

Thus we have the order and motives of Christ, and the sheep too, in this work of love. But there is another aspect in which it must be viewed as to the act in its own value, therefore estimated simply of the Father as such: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again . . . . I lay it down," etc. The perfect submission to the

Father's will; the perfect vindication of holiness; the perfect putting of sin in its darkness out of sight by the bright and all-shining light of Christ's work; the perfect vindication of the Father's love; the right estimate of God's character in it; the perfect triumph over evil in it, evil admitted in its full extent as in itself, and the title of God's justice against it as in man; the full giving a way to all the justice, and giving a fully justified door in spite of the accusations of Satan, both perfect ministrations of love to all His saints; fidelity to individual promise, and opportunity of general love, the secure foundation of its sovereign exercise: all these acted out in the voluntary exercise of Christ's love, ever the perfect object of the Father's love and delight. He was the abstract object of His delight. "*Therefore*"; just the opposite to the Adam of His delight. Also there was no "therefore" in him, save as the work of His (God's) hand. In Christ there is "of Myself" (which note).

Note, this includes the resurrection; for therein is the thing which shews its value. There was a "therefore" for grief and (so to speak) shame to God; but resurrection, Christ, was not merely good, but met this, wholly setting it aside. Without death there would have been no resurrection. Resurrection is not simply what is good. Without resurrection death was merely the power of Satan and of evil as from God, marred in honour in the imposition of curse in the works of His own hands. See Moses' argument: "Wherefore should the Egyptians say?" But it was not merely the fact but the mind in which He did it: therefore,

"Therefore doth My Father love *Me*." It was the bonâ fide giving of His life; as a Man, too, sensible of death. This was wondrous faith, perfect obedience, perfect honouring of God. It was the giving of *life* now, but it was in the knowledge of value, and that He might have it. So He trusted, as Abraham of old, [to] receive it again. The union of living, done in Himself, yet in obedience, is very marked. Both were necessary to make it perfect. "I lay it down of Myself; no one takes it from Me." Not man, he dare not; not God, He could do no such thing. Yet did He in one sense treating Him as a sinner, and man in another sense treating Him also (strange to speak) as a sinner; both, as to the suffering of it; neither, as to the will by which He died: "I have authority to lay it down, and authority to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father."

When a person's will is to suffer he can do in obedience. Both were here directly united, that there might be a "therefore"; as they were disunited, or the opposite united, in the first: by one, disobedience, sin and death; by the other, obedience, righteousness, resurrection. The union of the Lord's act and His obedience ("though He were a Son") is here very simple and definite in its statement. It is needful also to remark here the importance of the introduction of this in this place. As the Good Shepherd He laid down His life in love for the sheep. There was the specialty of love, His own love for them; but the value of His work was universal, it was intrinsic; it was by this the sheep were led to rejoice in it, that they were led to

every right thought, that they were led to the Divine mind, *one mind with the Father*, even in the intrinsic excellence of Christ's death. It is a wonderful sentence, "Therefore," etc., and most mighty; and in His simple glory (as a unity of mind) shews the exaltation of the Son in the point of His humiliation. Surely well may we wonder at this marvellous mystery of the incarnation. As the Father "therefore" so the Spirit witnesses of this in all its power, for in this they are all glorified, God is glorified. Of this they speak, the Son never, that is, of His glory in it; but He did it, and His work speaketh, and is spoken of, and so shall be till there be no need to speak of it more. Its glory shall be and is unto everlasting, as from it. It is the glory of God in time.

One need make no remark on that which follows as to the people's thoughts, but we should do well to compare diligently their sayings with what passed from the Lord's lips preceding. Note, it was "among the Jews"; and note the rejection of the words, the reference of others negatively to the word and also to this work, which was introduced before as the occasion of rejection of work as well as word. It arose, observe, from it. This closed the question as a question of dispensation. The privileges of the sheep were the thing then to be brought out.

Our Lord took the ordinary opportunity of intercourse. He walked about in Solomon's porch, and He was there in the way of intercourse. The Jews had in fact rejected the Lord upon full evidence. They then, with the consciousness that they were going wrong,

gather round Him, saying, How long do you distract our minds, deprive us of our ease of mind? "If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly"; we wish to be set at ease about it. They felt they were astray.

Our Lord referred to the ground on which He already stood. "I *told* you, and ye believe not. The *works* that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me." You will observe the introduction of the pronoun "I": "*I* do in My Father's name"; for it is very important here as characteristic of the Son, and demonstrative of His Person. Elsewhere He says, "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." But He and His Father are one. In Matthew, where the Messiahship was to be established, the Lord says, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come amongst you." For the fulness of the Spirit of the Lord resting upon Him was the truth of the Messiahship. Thus, while we find the Person of Jesus celebrated, we find that "it pleased that in Him should all fulness dwell"; "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." And while the Person of the Son was manifested in "I," the inseparable glory and presence of the Trinity was manifested in the Man Jesus here. Oh! here is rest and fulness by the teaching and communion of that Spirit. The works, though done in His Father's name (for that was His Sonship), witnessed of Him; done in His own name, they would have witnessed nothing. Done in His Father's name they witnessed "concerning Me," this Sonship and glory in that character. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep." The distinction

was now fully made. It was now to be acted out: When ye have closed the door upon yourselves, "My sheep hear My voice." I have nothing to tell you more than I have; but "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

Then comes the portion of the sheep, as their generic character had been fully stated. This is the full, sure result. The previous part had been conversant with dispensation: whence the sheep came, how they were gathered, taken out or brought in, the manner and effects of the hireling's conduct as to present (formal) estate, the external, official circumstances; though the attractive principles were stated. Then the death of the Lord, its special love, and its intrinsic character and value, the basis of the whole matter, having been stated (this we have not fully spoken of as we would), and the principle of the sheep having been stated ("I know them, and they follow Me,") as such, their actual Christ-given portion, their proper portion in His hand as belonging to Him in the purpose of God, is stated: He gives life, eternal life. Christ, the Shepherd, is the life-giver, eternal life. See this everywhere in the rest of John. Hence two most important points: "they shall never perish," He keeps them for the glory (see elsewhere an enquiry into *aiōnion*, eternal, *eis ton aiōna*, for ever); "and none shall pluck them out of My hand."

The life they receive is eternal life. They shall not perish, and they are in perfect protection, His hand. This was the fact in His Shepherdhood as the risen Man, in which He exercised it. He spoke in the Spirit as to the truth, being the Son of God; but He does not lose sight of

His humbled Sonship, yet His glory herein : " My Father, which gave them to Me." They are the concern as given " to Me," the Man Jesus, of the Father's own purpose ; an almighty secret about the sheep. They are Christ's sheep. In Him they get all the benefits He has spoken of, all their portion in Him ; and as such in the actual enjoyment of the blessings in Him, and in Him alone, as His simply and rightfully, and Himself given for them. But there was indeed a great secret between Him and His Father, here stated : " The Father who gave to Me " (not them alone, but the whole work, plan, counsel, and glory) " is greater than all," aye, or all things, " and no man can " (no man shall, was the point or fact He had stated before), " no man can pluck them out of My Father's hand." This was the prerogative title, whatever might be in the administration of catching or scattering as to man's responsibility (the shepherd below).

Then comes that which constitutes the essential value of the Shepherdhood of Christ : " I and My Father are one." And thus we have Christ in His Shepherdhood traced up from His simple obedience to the Father, entering in by the door, implicit though willing acquiescence in every prescribed circumstance, as the subject Man to truth, the Servant, up to His unity with the Father, through the whole course of the necessities of love which the position and care of the sheep imposed upon Him in the faithfulness of love, up to the security which He rejoiced His love could afford the sheep, in spite of all difficulties, all opposition, in His own essential unity with the Father. Earthly shepherdhood might

fail, and would, and the wolf seize and scatter them. But no man could seize out of His Father's hand, with whom He was one; and He would give them eternal life. He would do this, in spite of all, for His sheep. The former shewed the failure of all Church order, but the infallibility of Christ's personal care, because He was one with the Father as well as one with the sheep, and the security of these, simply and all through. The perfect security, as contrasted with all fallible systems, is the Person of Christ, from His obedience ("though He were a Son") to His essential unity with the Father, which we have seen so frequently brought out as the great theme of this Gospel, here as and applying it to the Shepherd of the sheep.

The giving His life is twice mentioned (verses 11 and 15); both as the acts of the Good Shepherd, but one is the act of faithfulness to them in the danger (as John xiii. 1); the other is the knowledge of exalted purpose according to the Father's knowledge of Him and His of the Father. One is the character of the Good Shepherd, "layeth down"; the other is "I know," etc., I lay down My life for the sheep, as such. Note also, in verses 28 and 29 we have distinctly the personal Shepherdhood of Christ's care: "I give," "My hand"; then the abstract supereminence of the Father's power: The Father who gave is greater than all things, and no one of all these things could pluck out of My Father's hand. There is no "them." It is the abstract excellency of the power.

—30. Christ is the perfect manifestation to us of the glory of the invisible God. "He hath declared Him." He is the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express

Image of His Person. But this we lose all (not to rest on controversial proofs) by the Arian false doctrine. The end of our souls is to know the Father. Him no eye hath seen or can see. None hath seen the Father, but the Son. But if the Son reveal not the Father to us, where shall we find Him, or how come to Him? But if He be inferior or subordinate in His nature how can He in His Person shew us the Father, or how in seeing Him can we have seen the Father? It stops short therefore of the whole end and purpose of God's counsels and our hopes, it deprives us of that centre of the whole mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. Take this away, and what have we but dark alienation, infinite, from the fountain of life and light? Here His unity with the Father is brought before us in respect of His preserving His people in the unchangeable security of His own power.

In chap. v. 17-19 He declares His working in the power of and unity with the Father, appealing at the same time to the works for evidence. In chap. xiv. 7-11 He declares His unity with the Father in respect of His manifestation of personal glory. The eternity of His nature is stated in chap. viii.: "Before Abraham was," etc.

—31. "The Jews again took up stones to stone Him. Jesus answered them, *Many good works have I shewn you of My Father*; for which work of them do ye stone Me? The Jews answered, saying, For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and that Thou, *being a man*, makest Thyself God." In very deed that He is so is our hope.

We have stated that this chapter is a continuation of the former, and here accordingly the Lord refers again, having gone through the circumstances of the sheep, to the "many good works." We have, then, in the eighth chapter the words, the testimony which closes with the testimony of full truth, what indeed they were, but what He was. Then we have the works; but on their failing (being the final external testimony), the effectual agency of His union with the Father is developed in the real purpose of it, both in knowledge and result, in the perfect security of the sheep in spite of all this failing and evil in all the rest, or opposition and enmity connected with it. Hence the transition passage of reasoning with the Pharisees. Then (shewing that He had indeed fulfilled everything so as to condemn and set aside all else), *His sheep* heard His voice, His testimony, the first thing. Rejected Gentiles also would be brought in by the voice of the risen Shepherd, for that was atonement. And then came the effectual arm of power, which would keep them, which had indeed wrought among them, but was rejected; and upon the assertion of His unity with the Father, not simply what He was in Himself, shewn specially in this of the sheep, whether in submission, knowing Him and His mind, or in the exercise of the care. The sheep drew it all *out* (compare John xvii. in the unity spoken of). The connection is *most important* (which note), and their taking up stones to stone Him. He resumes the general evidence of this to *them*: "Many good works." So upon the same works He says, as before quoted, "Now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." As to the former, "If I had

not come and spoken among them, they had not had sin." For this was speaking from God, and He was as much God as the Father, and more especially the Word. Therefore He says, changing the language, "But the Father which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." They were to the same purport; but there was a distinction of revelation in them. So, in the eighth chap., of the word. It was "I AM," "I and My Father are one"; and here accordingly the sheep come in. This is all of great importance.

Let us further dwell on the conversation which followed from our Lord with the Jews. What comfort to have Scripture to refer to, to love as the word of God, of Christ, receiving it as true, searching us, and revealing all that is in God, the Lord and Saviour, the supply for the necessities as the remedy for the sins thereby brought to light! Our Lord was here applying Himself to them. I seek here merely to know what this reveals; this is the true way of reading the word. He had left the special revelation of Himself as concerning the sheep, and was now reasoning with them, not as concerning them. That had failed, and He had shewed the sheep as taking their place in the care of God, but as condemning them out of their own mouth, as it were: "Is it not written in *your* law" (not the Law of God) "in your law: I have said, Ye are gods? If therefore He called them gods with whom the word of God was." This may be spoken of all power that is of the word of God, by which all things consist, which was indeed *in* Christ, but more particularly of those (the Jews) who knew or having the oracles were peculiarly cognizant of its being from God; yet, I say,

true everywhere, for God is true; that is, rulers who held power of the word. "And the Scripture cannot be broken." For He does not explain, but state. "Do ye say of Him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am Son of God?"

Note. This quotation of the *elohim* shews, I think, that it applies to Jews properly, for the judges there are expressly in the Law called *elohim*, and hence the rebuke of our Lord is most powerful. "What the Law saith, it saith to," etc., though it ought to be true of all. It also shews the import of that word *elohim* in the Law, and how foolish the dispute between judges and God, for it is the calling judges "gods" because they stood as sent in God's place and acted God in their office. We know that all power is of God, and ought to be exercised in His righteousness. This eighty-second Psalm judges them. Compare Psalm ci.

I feel the holy and faithful force of that word, "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father"; nevertheless, all the things that are revealed about Him, and with the Father, is our life and joy, to know Him, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. This is the point stated and rested on here; for we must ever remember that Jesus speaking is speaking in the flesh; it is the Man Jesus speaking, though often He may say things which are true only because He is withal God.

He speaks to them therefore merely as unbelievers of Himself as sent, marked, and separated, as the Man Jesus, and sent to the world. There He was so to be known, for He is the Sanctified One. We know Him as

such in the flesh. No man knows the Father but the believer. Here at once we know the subordination of the Son taking office and Manhood, in the Covenant of redemption, whereby, and whereby alone, we know the Father (being "in form of God," He did all this humbling Himself, being first shewn indeed as Jehovah of hosts in the old dispensation); yet know Him as one with the Father, which is our inscrutable blessing and joy, for we have fellowship so, by one Spirit with, etc. But Him the Father hath set forth to be known of the world, and borne witness by His works that His words are true, that He is the Son of God. But the point of faith by the operation of the Spirit is to know the Son, Him to be the Son of God; and thereby and therein we know the Father also, for "he that hath the Son hath the Father also." So Paul: "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, *to reveal His Son in me*, immediately," etc.

I would take notice here, not intruding above that which is written, into what I observe in Scripture as to the manner of stating this in John i. I find the truth concerning our Lord stated simply and fully to our blessing. The recognition of the Father and the Son comes in on faith, and known by the incarnation, can behold His glory, etc. So in verse 18, the declaration of the Father. And this He is to faith; for faith, and faith alone, recognizes Jesus to be the *Son of God*. Again, all through the third chapter, to the close, we have the great heads of doctrine declared simply and revealingly; the lifting up by necessity the Son of Man; the freeness of

the love: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," to the same purpose, "that whosoever believeth in Him," etc. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world," etc. Then, verse 33, we have, after "he that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true," even His that came from heaven, after speaking of the unmeasuredness of the Spirit in Him (Jesus), so "the Father loveth *the Son*, and hath given all things into His hand." This is a doctrine within faith, etc., the comfort and the glory of hope to those who have known and believed on the Son.

All previously we have God giving, God sending; but when we know Him whom He hath sent we thereby know the Father and the Son. We shall find this gradually and beautifully developed in the opening of this Gospel, and in the practical and blessed order in which it reaches us, while the truth of who the Word was is set first, lest it might seem subordinate; that is, intrinsically. Hence we find, after the third chapter, the Lord, when speaking in His own Person directly, says ever, My Father, or the Father, which sent Me. When He speaks of the Son of Man, then He says, "God the Father sealed." The close of the third of John is of John the Baptist, in speaking of their position (that is, the Jews, not believers): constantly, "God"; for they knew not Him nor the Father. In the seventh the Father is not spoken of, for it is not the point there spoken of. But here, the works being done in His Father's name (for otherwise He must have set up His own glory), He here speaks of the Father, and "the

Father sent": "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not."

His words were not simply His Father's words; therefore He says "God's words," though He heard them with the Father; but the glory of Sonship He claimed in His works, the evidence of what He was from the Father, shewing in faith that the Father was in Him, yet not simply dwelling in Him as a Man, but He in the Father also: alike "The Father in Me, and I in Him." This is a blessed sentence. Doing them in His Father's name, He could (while He therein gave all the glory to the Father as righteous in the world) take it as nothing less in evidence than that He was the Son, so Son as that the Father dwelt in Him, and He in the Father. This is a glorious truth. It is, then, as the object of faith, as doing works in the world, as manifested by works amongst men, or known as the Son by His word in faith (being taught of the Father), that He is spoken of as from the Father, sent, sanctified by the Father, as here, and as in 1 John iv. 14. In Galatians iv. 4 we have the public fact of faith again: "God sent forth His Son," having His existence, being, as so sent, "come." So the Law, in its institution in the world on Mount Sinai, "began with glory."

This is the great subject of faith; so when thus instituted (if I may so speak of His being manifested in the world), He was "come under law," shewing remarkably how Son is the name of the Person (which is the great clue of the whole), not of His nature, whether as Man or as God); for it is quite clear that it was Christ who gave the Law on Mount Sinai; but now,

"come of woman," He, the same Jesus Jehovah, was "come under law"; a glorious and blessed subjection and truth, magnifying the Law in its excellence indeed, and identifying it with the mind of God marvellously. But the joy and glory of faith to a believer is not that as the subject of faith, but therein knowing the *Father and the Son.* This is the real life and joy and glory, as the Apostle says: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ"; and this is the portion of the sons, because they have the Spirit of the Son in their hearts, dwelling in them, by which they know the Father, and know His love to them, as to Jesus, and have fellowship with the Son; also being one with Him by the same Spirit as the link of communication in His thus becoming flesh, and knitting the body to Himself, and know their unity in the knowledge of the unity of the Father and the Son, who, if they be not so—then does the Church not know its unity; for it is "as we," "as in us," "as Thou in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in us." And this the Spirit of God, in all His characters, brings them, in vital blessings and life, partakers of the Divine nature, into the fulness of.

This was the closing point of faith, finished here as to intercourse with the people on ample and conclusive evidence. The evidence of the Son is in the Father's works: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Our Lord submits Himself to the same evidence: "If I do not the works of My Father," whether in power or love, "good works," "believe Me not. But if I do"; how but that I am so; if I do, the evidence is complete: "if ye believe not Me,

believe the works, that ye may know"; of which they are demonstrative evidence in unity of thought, purpose, design, glory, their character in every respect, everything which exhibited that the Father dwelt in Him, and He in the Father. Still it was faith to perceive the glorious truth, which can be perceived only in communion.

"They sought therefore to take Him, but He escaped out of their hands." This certainly closed the direct testimony of ministry between Jesus and the Jews. It is not that He did not speak to them afterwards as to dispensation towards them, for He did, as in Matt. xxii., xxiii., etc. But as to moral testimony, on which that fate was founded in present rejection, this closed it, and the sheep were distinguished. All that then followed was the national rejection, and the calling a people to give fruit in due season. What follows was a vindication of the glory of the rejected Son of God (who quickened whom He would), and the Father's always hearing Him, and the great truth of the resurrection now eminently necessary. Hence, having been rejected in this the point of faith, the Son of God, the central name, as we have seen, of faith, we find this vindicated in the following chapter, as against those who rejected Him in it, in the raising of Lazarus, as we shall see. Then in the twelfth our Lord's headship as King of the Jews, then the gathering of the peoples, the headship of the Gentiles. But to this His death, we learn, was needful. This is the scene of the glory of the rejected Messiah. His ministerial offices (for His people) follow in the following chapters. But we will, please God, enquire and look into them when we arrive at them. Now

merely I consider the dependent order of the chapters on what we have considered.

—40-42. Thus the Lord left them; and the scene being, as we have now seen, closed, He returns as it were to the original testimony with which He set out on His toilsome but love-ministered and love-ministering journey. "All things that John said of this Man were true." True they surely were, and John bore the best testimony to his own truth, however, in bearing witness, loving, faith-hearted witness, to His glory and Person and work; in a word, all his forerunning message. How long does the faithful testimony of a faithful, rejected witness last and bear fruit, when he perhaps little thought or dreamt of it! The Lord returns to that when all His works and word, wonderful as they were, had been rejected and passed by; "and many believed on Him there."

Happy John! rejected as he was; and every word and work our Lord did was testimony to and the seal of his glory. What he spake, Jesus did, and made every word which was his office and glory true. His testimony became effectual in its fulfilment, and the thing fulfilled strengthened in evidence to men, "and many believed on Him there." This is remarkable. It shews the work of God going [on] during (in spite of) His rejection.

Chapter XI.

But there was a further and critical testimony to be brought of Jesus in all His characters.

This chapter is of the most interesting character. We have already seen the circumstances under which it was given. The Evangelist therefore is careful to record that it was to those whom Jesus loved, to some of the Remnant who loved and received Him, to whom it was done, though in the presence of the Jews. But nothing was said to them. We have the fact, too, that there was a known and recognized Remnant, the circumstances of whose love were recognized and recorded in the midst of the rejection of the Jews: "It was that Mary." There was a little circle of God's love, despised perhaps of man, but recorded with Him, where Jesus's heart might find present rest; poor rest, indeed, but rest for His love in some sort; where His affections, as the ministering Servant of God, chilled, if chilled they could be, by the selfish blasts of the world's unbelief, might expand and find comfort, if they could not rest. "Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest." It was sufficient motive, they thought; and they thought well. They knew Jesus, for any claim; they could at once rest them there. It is a great thing to know that even in this sense Jesus loves. They had shewn their love to Him, poor as it was, and they reckoned upon His, for they knew it.

But there was much more to be developed. It was not only as the sympathizing Son of Man with even miraculous power that was to be manifested. There was the whole development of the victory over evil. God was to be glorified, the *Son of God* was to be glorified in it. There was the whole development of the sufferance of it in reaching its height; that the power of the victory of it even to resurrection [might be] shewn; whereby also He should be declared the Son of God with power. The necessity of subjection to evil, the passage through it in the light, not stumbling, where the will of God led till the time for it was come; the viewing it as taking place in the faith of deliverance, so as that death should be "he sleepeth"; the perfect sympathy of our Lord with the suffering under it of man; the identification of the resurrection power with His Person, in contrast with the mere miraculous prevention of evil; the certainty of deliverance; God's triumph over evil, which the resurrection was, as contrasted with the imbecility of man's sympathy; the unity of the Father with the Son in this matter (compare John v., and compare *vv.* 23, 25 and 41); the effect of it when seen: it is a full canvassing of evil and Christ as in Person with it; what man can do; what he may miraculously be thought to do; and what God in Christ, what the Son, is manifested to do, has been manifested to do.

—4. Here we have the great general principle, and true indeed in every delivered soul. There was Jesus' love trusted, and Jesus did love them all: "This sickness is not unto death." Not that it was not deadly in its character, not that it did not in fact produce and end in

death. He knew it did. But this was not the ultimate result. The permission of evil was for the glory of God; that is, in triumph over it in behalf of the creature, and that in the Person of the Son, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. The resurrection power of the Son is the great central evidence of this. It was the overcoming of evil in its ultimate natural results, the full power of it as in the hands of Satan; death. It was therefore mercy to allow evil, though painful mercy, to have its full results; because it gave unqualified ground for our assurance of God's love through all, and also where evil *seemed* to have its way; but, above all, in full, unqualified deliverance from, triumph over, all. This was the point exhibited in the world indeed, but in the person of the saints, the really identified ones with Jesus. We must also remark that this is the power of the resurrection, and therefore has not its full accomplishment till Jesus returns, acting in His resurrection power, raising the saints, and taking them to be with Himself.

Till then evil is allowed to prevail, as it was allowed to prevail over Him. And though the Lord and His disciples were doubtless intrinsically happier, yet as regards the world and the power of Satan, it was allowed to prevail over them as regards His death. So the case of His saints. Evil is allowed to prevail, but it is not unto death, but reconciles the mind of the saint to the failure of all present things, that God may be all in all to him, that it might be full affiance in God. Thus Adam; thus the Jewish system; thus Christ Himself, fulfilling all righteousness; thus the Church of God;

thus everywhere that which partakes of the creature. Resurrection is its hope, a hope verified in Christ actually, where sin is, through Jesus, and in the power of it in result, where only subject, but not willingly. The deliverance here referred to, which we are taught to look to in a rejected Christ (for Christ was now rejected) is resurrection, and therefore in fulness not till His return; for then we see and know the Christ that was rejected. And this is the image here presented; Christ absent because rejected; suffering the evil, therefore, to take its course, *as though* He did not mind it or could not help it; that is, to the unbelief of those mixed up with it. As He says elsewhere, "As if a man slept, and it sprung and grew up, he knew not how"; and upon His return setting it all aside, and gladdening the hearts of His saints by yet more blessed demonstration of His interest and power, aye, and sympathy ever with us under the evil.

There is more than this brought out before us in this passage; but this is so brought out; for His return was to His saints, quickening the dead, and satisfying those who were waiting for Him, expecting Him. And the Lord now bears a double character; and also His acts, having been morally rejected, His acts are the acts in this moral sense of the rejected One; and so, if in power, indicative of the character in which He will return; although, as not being actually rejected, they had a direct agency on those who were concerned in it, and put them under the responsibility of the rejection of Him in the (power of that) character in which He will be actually revealed in all its actuality in that day.

This much opens out all that follows, and also the old prophets, as Zechariah. This opens out the force of verse 54, and shews how the resurrection of the saints, I think, precedes the manifestation of Jesus to the Jews; while the first resurrection is shewn to be the glory of God; and also, etc.; and that it is subsequent to this that the development of the full actual hostility of the unbelieving portion of the Jews, not the nation, will shew itself, etc.; and the order of the whole glory of His Sonship.

But we also learn (which the passage shews) that while unbelief would think that it could only be "if," etc., that the Lord's love watched every circumstance for the greater demonstration of His love. This therefore is set first when the object or thesis of the story is given, the facts on which it rose, and the purpose for which it was: the intervention of death on those that Jesus loved, that the intervention of His deliverance might the rather illustrate His love in their entire exemption, and identification with *His glory*, glorified in, etc. But "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," (none were not objects); they were His hosts in His pilgrimage, as the saints indeed are now (how poorly!); and they are not here yet set first. But it might seem they loved Him, not He loved them; had done, or however afterwards shewed it. We speak merely of their character, "what she could." There was deep necessity for His shewing this, for they were subject to death. All exemption was resurrection exemption, though being in the power of Him who had borne it, and risen. The full result might be shewn in the change, instead of death, of some; an additional illustration of the great redemption.

"Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." When Jesus heard that he was sick, He abode two days in the same place. It is hard for the Church to think often (for it is unbelieving, very,) that it is good for Jesus to stay so long away. And the Spirit and the Bride, too, say, Come. So, for the principle, errors through daily life: it is hard to think it good that deprecated evil should not be prevented by the Lord, that the Lord should not come on the first requisition of love. But, though even unbelief or sin may have brought the evil, we have this wrongful confidence in Jesus' love that He must be at our beck to remove it. Surely He has indeed made Himself our Servant from first to last, but in His wisdom (for that is love), not ours. But we have evidence that the Lord has withheld His hand in deliverance. He has not His eye. It is not from carelessness. When the just time has elapsed He is as ready to go at all cost, though it might seem to man of no profit; and His volunteering to come at cost in the time of wisdom is the evidence it was no want of love deterred or delayed Him. He proposes to go when none else would; but shews that in calmness of spirit and perfect knowledge He had waited the just time.

After stating the principle, He says, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth"; as if He had been by his bed-side watching; but in what sovereign calmness: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth"! In the midst of all their anxieties there was One, who they thought was neglecting them, whose eye was watching there, marked his closing eyelids, that He might the more abundantly shew forth (and to us also) the full power of His love and His

fellowship in the glory [of] its exertion in his behalf. In a word, the three great points in the chapter (public points, so to speak,) are the apparent abstinence of Christ from appearing to deliver: "He abode in the same place"; His perfect sympathy with us: "Jesus wept"; the exercise of full power in deliverance from its full results. The gracious tenderness of Christ's considerate yet, I may call it, anxious manner, anxious for their belief, runs through and characterizes this whole passage. He was at home with His disciples, yet with a feeling which enabled Him to be thus at ease with them, which His fulness enabled Him to have: "*Our friend* Lazarus."

We must remember the order to be thus: chap. viii., the word rejected; chap. ix., the works rejected; chap. x., the distinction of the sheep. Here the portion of the sheep, the peculiar, Christ-comforting portion; their resurrection; and herein the real glory of the rejected Sonship; and then (for herein the sure mercies of David were sealed) the Jewish royalty and the Gentile headship.

All this the Jews had marred. It was revealed, that is, done publicly and openly after their rejection of Him. "The day" was the time of Jesus' presence in this world, the Light of the world. He, as walking in this light, present obedience to His Father's will, and they, as following Him, had nothing to fear. And so, in general, wherever we are simply doing the will of God in His time we have nothing whatever to fear, because the God is whom we serve, and He is the God and Orderer of all things. When the time of service is ended our departure is equally clear.

There is this distinction : he that walks in the day has the light of the world ; but the walker in the night has no light *in himself*, and it is night, and all is totally dark. It is not said ever we have light in ourselves. We have *no* light in ourselves ; but he that has the light walks in the light (so the believer), in the Light of this World, Christ, the living Obeyer of God's will as Image of His Person. Such was the state of the Jews after rejecting Him. They went on in darkness, though thinking and seeking to walk. They had no light in them. Not so the disciples ; they had the light with them.

Furthermore, the Lord designates distinctively that, as to the children, the elect disciples, death had passed away : "*Our friend sleepeth.*" His coming thither again will be to awaken them. How sweetly and perfectly gracious is the whole truth, coming from the Bearer's lips, of all the evil which gave occasion to the interference ! Never man wept as He wept, or spake as He spake. Yet His people weep with Him, if they cannot speak like Him. Yet withal, with His Spirit, may it be much so, to His glory, from Him and to Him.

The Lord gathers instruction to all from His own sorrows, His own trials ; content if they be taught and fed. He wept over Jerusalem, and He wept over a world in death, for He saw the Jews weeping ; and if His power delivered the saints only, His tears were shed over others. And should not ours [be] ? They understood not the Lord's speech, but their ignorance (so ever) is the occasion of our knowledge ; for our Lord plainly herein shews that He meant his death in saying he "sleepeth."

And so is the common expression the expression of truth: he "fell on sleep," "them that sleep in Jesus," and the like; for it is but that which closes the memory on the sorrows of the world that is passed, to wake up in invigorated strength for a day that shall never wear it out; for pain shall not weary a new-born soul nor a resurrection body.

"And I rejoice for your sakes that I was not there, that ye may believe." We see here how a saint can rejoice in evil, in one sense, though not in iniquity; and retrospectively we can even glorify God where we have failed. But thus when these things begin to come to pass, a tide of flowing disorder and evil, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Thus we see why evil is permitted; for the greater manifestation of the glory of God, for the everlasting strength and comfort of His saints. It shews how the Lord can view it, His consideration of His saints in everything, and thus how the coming in of the devil's power is made the instrument of their greater edification and everlasting comfort. And it is great comfort to us that the Lord can say as to every evil, evil in which we may be conscious of failure (for every evil is from the Lord's absence in power and the devil's presence, though under the control of God and of Christ): "*I* am glad that I was not there." For, though it may arise from unbelief, the Lord will bring greater glory out of it, which is our strength and sure comfort; and we retrospectively can see the glory and patience and wisdom of our Lord; for it indeed always ends with, "Let us go to him." To unbelief there was, as it were,

no time to go. But the Lord views it all in the power of the resurrection life in which He was going to fulfil the counsel of God. The whole sentence is one of great practical comfort of faith to the believer. The prospective power of the chapter hangs on this, the sufferance of evil; ending, "Let us go to him," in the power of resurrection life. That the Jewish body shall be quickened, so I admit; but it is not on that I rest here.

It is remarkable that Thomas should [be] here brought out in love to our Lord. "With Him" I count our Lord. It is remarkable that, at the time of our Lord's going to shew resurrection power, the thought should have been that He was going to die, and the only portion of the saints was to shew affection in dying with Him. Resurrection power and life is the great object and portion of faith (they were to be witnesses of His resurrection, for that is the defeat of the devil's power), and this is the point of unbelief. So Mary in the garden, at the sepulchre; so Thomas afterwards; but both shew how affection to the Lord may be with utter failure of purpose where there is not this faith. It is illustrative of the position of the disciples when they had not this faith, and their total ignorance of His mind, even in the expression of their love to Him. They loved Him; not, indeed, as the Son of God. Hence Paul: "Yea, though we had known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." Let us go, and die with Christ, is the best that affection short of resurrection power, or the faith of resurrection power, can do. And this is the main point in the connection of the subject of

the chapter. They could say he would not have died, they could (through grace) be willing to die with Him; but resurrection liberty was known to none at all. We see supposition of power to hinder, assurance that it would not have happened, willing to die themselves with Him, according to what their minds were interested in; but it is all in every contrast, as the sorrow or weakness or ignorance of unbelief, with the delivering power of resurrection.

Thus far then the preliminary position and circumstances. Then the existing ones. Jesus came, and found him dead four days. It was nigh to Jerusalem. It was to be done as a last sort of evidence before the Jews, though not amongst them. Those who had at all ears to hear might yet be separated from the untoward generation. But the same great principle is developed. They came to give the world's comfort. We have also in Martha and Mary very different natural characters, and very different apparent aspects of faith towards Jesus; one ready and conclusive, one affectionate and dependent; but nothing stepping out of the limits of death. The Lord, as analogously to the Laodicean church (while the Philadelphian state was recognized), stood at the door, and knocked, that if any had ears to hear, they might hear. How blessedly, too, the Lord used the poor unbelieving sorrows of Martha and Mary, etc., and the death of Lazarus, to the greater manifestation of the witness of His power than had ever been before! What we can do after we have been apparently driven out by those amongst or to whom the testimony was to be offered is often more than when we have apparent

passage in and out amongst them. It may be painful, but we are more separated as to our own strength when it is done amongst the disciples; and it can be done more openly, for it belongs to disciples; and the rest will hear. When He raised Jairus's daughter, the Lord had to put them all out, save the three.

We have, further, what our Lord was, as intrinsically in Himself, and yet how He did all things in dependence on His Father, which was His perfection as a Man. Martha's faith went further than simply so far seeing the prevention of evil by Jesus's presence. She believed or knew that, what Jesus asked, God would give Him. "He shall ask for thee, for he is a prophet." Hence the force in that day, "Ye shall ask Me nothing"; and, "I say not that I will pray the Father for you." Being sons, we have the privilege of asking the Father directly. We ask in His name. Her apprehensions were confused, not practical; for she owned the fact of His Sonship, nothing of the office of Sonship. The Lord answers her case at once, her anxieties, in the power of what He was; the best way of meeting unbelief; and, while it draws out the point where there is want of intelligence in our faith, gives occasion to the meeting of it by that which is in Jesus. "I know that he shall rise in the resurrection in the last day." She recognized God as ordering this as a common point of faith for all; but there was no identification with Jesus in her mind. She knew that God would hear Jesus. She knew there was a resurrection in the last day. Such is the common faith. But Jesus's quickening power to His saints is another thing. "*I am*," said Jesus to

her, "the resurrection and the life." The assertion is all-sufficient, and comprehends every point of positive faith; and as meeting the aspects of unbelief. There was a resurrection, and God would hear Jesus. Now, "*I* am the resurrection, and the life." Nor was it a mere general thing at the last day, but the intrinsic power of life in Jesus. "I am the resurrection, and the life." It was, in a word, what He was.

We shall see how faith comes in; for the statement is very perfect; it states the fact in Him, or what *He was*, not merely its operation in faith, which could have none save He was that (for faith, observe, made no distinction in a general resurrection). Moreover, there is a distinction between resurrection and life; for this is a very full revelation; still it is as the object of faith: "He that believeth on Me, though he have died, shall live." Then He is the Resurrection: "And every one living and believing on Me shall never die." Now, the Lord in presence is the power of resurrection. Though He has the power of resurrection (and so indeed quickens our souls), yet He does not exercise it, nor could till the earthlies be to be set right, He taking His power; and the heavenlies too. But He had it; as then, so always; for it is intrinsic. *He is*; but it is when He can say, "I am," that He will exercise it. Now He is as to presence as though He were not, and things are so too. All must come together. The present Jesus was so, the rejected Jesus is so, as to the inward life of the souls of the elect, of the children of God; but their life is hid with Him; and He is so

in all its results in the day when He shall appear to them that believe in Him.

Martha did not intelligently understand or believe this. She believed what the Lord said to her as His word, and stated all she could of sound faith; but feeling she could not hold communion with the Lord in this, as soon as she had made what she could of acknowledgment of faith (yet she was not rejected) she departed. Ah! how does the world shut up the channels of access, the links of union, between the Lord's heart and ours! How does it now, a cold, loose, general belief in a resurrection in the last day, bar the communion with Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life, and who *opens* out all these glorious and blessed truths in the identity of believers with Himself! He is the Resurrection and the Life: "He that believeth." Martha was cumbered about much serving. She went to call Mary to relieve her mind apparently, though not unmixedly, from the Lord's presence, in that in which she could not hold communion with Him.

Oh, how does the world cheat us! Who would have thought that the zealous service of Martha should have hindered her from the joyous portion with the revealing Jesus? Yet so it was. And so it is ever. So much as we have of the world, so much is the glory of Jesus shut out from us. Great things may go first; everything must follow, or the heart sticks yet in the world. It may not seem so deep; it is often stickier; but, thank God! the Lord's love is better than all. Yet Martha was a Christian (that is, a believer); she loved, and Jesus loved her. Her name we have seen (lest

she should be despised) is marked first. She felt a righteous, common interest with her sister, and she evidently did so, and there was good feeling mixed up with her bad state. It was marred, spoiled, by her cumberedness; beautiful spots, but no whole; no illustration of Jesus; for many a spot was barren; none was really deep.

Often we turn to speak of Jesus to another because we have not communion with Him ourselves, to talk about Him because we are not able, we are oppressed, with talking with Him; we go to call some sister of the Master, but not to stay with the Master. Deep communion requires much communion; and though labour is good, the point to be presented to the Lord is the fruit. We look for some one else to hold communion with Jesus. We are conscious we cannot ourselves.

Yet Martha was loved, it was true; but how cold "The Master is here"! It is plain that in the outgoings of her heart (and we know from what abundance it springs) she had not practically reached beyond this: The Teacher, the Master, is here. Oh, world, world, world! how dost thou cheat us, and deceive us out of Jesus, in whom is all fulness, all fulness dwells; the Resurrection and the Life, all fulness; out of fulness we should receive! Doubtless He looked for Mary. But why? Why had He not sympathy with Martha? Yet He loved her. But the Lord was shut up here: "Dost thou believe this?" His heart was going out in revealing this. "I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world." A sound confession! She went off, and called her sister. But

there was not power, either, in this confession. It was saving, I doubt not. The intercourse of our Lord with Martha, and all the circumstances, as well as the words, implants the belief.

But oh! what power was there (yet not all) in that word "the *living* God"! I believe that indeed is a truth of faith, the present characteristic of His Sonship; the very power of it then was life, quickening power in Christ the Son when in the flesh upon earth, in the power of this life in God. Martha's faith, her sentiment, was defective. She knew the Person (we the Person properly, for the *living* God was left out, and therefore also set first, now death and sin had entered); she knew not the power, or felt it not in faith. Now, indeed, resurrection was involved in quickening power in life, as intrinsic life, and this was what was revealed in Christ: "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," which note, for it shews holiness is in resurrection standard—in Him, however, declaratively—, not living, but it was not necessary to it, but incidental; necessary only by an incident, but this incident consequent upon creature state unsustained, that is, sin, the actings of the creature unsustained. (Hence Christ had no sin, and could have none, for the actings of the creature were sustained, yet as a creature, but a creature in union with God the Son; and this is the solution of the mystery thus far, as argued among many).

But note further, humblingly, that *hasty* reference to the Lord's heard-of return merely for the supply of or to meet one's own natural feelings (so Martha) is not the

way of grace. It may after have to say, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." There may be, in one so acting, capacity, desire, of communion in those things in the power of which so coming the Lord is revealed, with which He occupies Himself in the communion and blessing of His saints. It is not but that, when heard of as calling, she arises hastily, and goes out to meet Him; but, I say, acting on the mere satisfying of natural feelings herein is not the abiding power of communion, the bringing in, of which is the power of Jesus's coming. This secretly shews, too, much the state and frame of mind in which Martha made the communication in which she was. The actings of Mary were, however, immediate on the call.

Martha, loved as she was, yet acted on the impulse of her nature, with no holy fulness of deference to Jesus, yet not without gracious acknowledgment of Him, yet also with no full perception of what He was, and occupied with her natural anxieties, which clouded this, and destroyed her deference: "I know that even now whatsoever Thou askest of God, God will give it Thee." This itself may be a love of the object given, not of Jesus the Giver; makes Him the Servant, not the Master, of our blessing. If He make Himself so, in the riches of His grace, blessed as it shall be, blessed be His name! But it was, too, but as an accepted Man with God, the Teacher: "God will give it Thee"; no consciousness of what Jesus was in *Himself*. Though He might even glorify the Father, who glorified Him, though He might glory in the title, the special witness of His love, of Son of Man, yet should His disciples see

through and understand His love indeed to them in this; but His glory in Deity withal. To Him be the praise and glory.

But I cannot help thinking that there is much allusion here to the state of the Jewish and Gentile Church. I speak merely in the spirit and character of them. The great truth of resurrection is that brought out, which is the order of blessing to everything where sin has entered. But, in whatever measure of faith and ignorance, all met Him away from the place where the Lord shewed His present power. The Jews followed Mary, supposing she was going to the grave to weep, and Mary the suggestion of Martha that the Lord was come, and called for her. Mary could but say, "If here, my brother had not died"; but there was less loquacity, and more deference, and real apprehension. Jesus spoke to Martha, and reasoned with her: He wept with Mary. The full power of death over all alike was brought before His soul, and He wept with them too, and mourned with their sorrow; only with full sense of its cause, power, and as none else could, for they were under it, the power of evil (in death).

It does not appear that Martha was there. She did not meet Him at this scene out of the village. There was doubtless perfect love in Jesus; but there was more, the power of help in sympathy. He saw what it all was, as knowing the Father. "He groaned in spirit, and was troubled." But He said, "Where have ye laid him?" The power of human sympathy does but tie down to the grief which it would assuage. It lays in the grave, and puts a stone on the mouth. The Lord indeed

grieves, troubles Himself, but seeks the case of ruin for remedy.

The whole of this exceedingly interesting chapter is very imperfectly gone through; for there is the whole depicting of the infirmity of unbelief and man's necessity, and the sympathy and energy of Jesus for the glory of God, and that detailed with the utmost beauty, so as in effect to declare the Father. The present quickening power of Jesus, Sonship, is the great point (with the perfect sympathy with our weakness); and yet the necessity of Christ's presence felt by man is unbelief. Compare the centurion's faith, Luke vii. 7. This, as applied to the whole scope (followed on that word, subsequently: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again"), is of most important consequence and extensive bearing, as to which the "Lord, if Thou hadst been here," is of great import. I speak as to the scene before Christ's death, as well as after.

I do not at all, in this passage of Jesus's life, exclude the sympathy of actual affection. The compassion of Jesus was drawn out, and His affection. He could exercise it, for He was above it, save in sympathy bearing its burthen: "Where have ye laid him?" That is all ye can do. The man that I love I can do more for. How did their hearts bound yet at the thought of Jesus's sympathy! He was at least concerned in their trouble. It set them at ease with Him: "Lord, come and see." John, too, was there, and entered thus far into his Master's mind; as now taught, much more. "It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it." But also observe the tendency (which indeed Jesus meets) to bring down the

use of God to the service of our sorrow, instead of the power of God to the remedy of our sorrow to His glory. This is our unbelief. It is, Come and see Lazarus dead; not, Thou, O Lord, art the Resurrection and the Life. But it is thus withal that God is rightly glorified in our weakness.

You may also notice how, from the statement of the great truth of power of deliverance, we are passed through the sorrow and power, as it were, of the thing to be delivered from, and then into the result of the delivering power, taking the subject of the sorrow up out of it. This was just the mission of Christ, "who, being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich"; and the soul is ever (sin being entered in) so passed through this. If He had been simply received, the result of blessing would have been simple and immediate on the manifestation of the power. But the necessity which caused its manifestation implied its entering into the sorrow; that is, in result; for faith would not have led it there; but so would not the sympathy of Jesus have been known. Our comfort is that He who voluntarily led us in, and entered in Himself, can, passing through it, exhibit in His and the Father's glory deliverance, a deliverance enhanced by the expression of His love. But it is quite the way, though it ought not to be, of the daily experience of our souls. It results from unbelief, but Jesus in His quickening power can enter down into our sorrows to make us rich by His poverty. Compare, "The hour is come that the Son of Man," though there willingly, and what then follows here. It was in sympathy merely with others, but the

same thing: "I am the resurrection." But they led Him to the tomb. He went there; yea, He wept there. But, brethren beloved of the Lord, He neither remained there, nor left Lazarus there. He remained, and that in immediate power, till He called Lazarus forth from it.

Note also how His entering into the grief enabled Him to call out of it, and produced that groan of sympathy which drew out the exercise of the Father's power. For it is the sympathy of man with Jesus which calls in the exercise of the Father's power and is the exercise of the Son's. The Son of God is glorified thereby; that is, in this raising power, I say, disclose the Father, for it does so abstractedly. It is the glory of God, but being wrought by the Son it brings out this, is the great mystery (of God's purpose), the necessity of man, or his ruin; brings out the union of the Father and the Son, and discloses them in the exercise of this relationship of blessing to us; and then by one Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, we are given fellowship with them, known in Jesus glorified (which note). Compare also the case of Stephen.

The sympathy of Jesus shews His love to a stranger, and Jesus yields it to them. We yield to it, or refuse it because it brings us under the power of others. But all was confusion while it was thus. All felt the ruin. Jesus felt with the ruin; and, while they thought they saw the evidence of love, they did not see how He entered into the cause of their sorrows. Their thoughts about His power did but give occasion, or however leave occasion, for the exercise of His spirit. Man's grief, I say, buries deeper. Jesus takes away the impediments.

But this groan was the presenting the power of death to His Father, the bearing it in His spirit before God, the witness that He felt with it; and setting us an example of those groanings which cannot be uttered; a groan the Father heard; a groan accompanied with the thanksgiving of faith.

Again, Martha presented the utter hopelessness of the case. It could not be *now*. That is the point of faith when Jesus is present in power. But resurrection from death, yea, from corruption, being the power of quickening, it matters not what state of death the person [be] in. All circumstances in the power of God are unbelief; He is not therefore reckoned God in them. But here is the glory of God. Man failed under evil; he bound with others under the grief of it. But it stopped there. All men alike mark its power. The power of death is not shewn only in the world in them that die, but in those that are left by it. It wastes, and makes the breach, but the waters of sorrow break in thereat, and waste and trouble all around.

Jesus sympathized with it. He was troubled. But it was the active exercise of sensible grief. But He came to the tomb. The glory of God is in His living power over evil in death in Jesus, and the exercise of love (to those ruined by it). The recognition of this in Jesus is the grand principle of faith. This was Peter's confession, alone in it; and upon this therefore the Lord declared He would build His Church. But blessed to us it is that in this we do see the glory of God. But come to the point of difficulty, we exercised with God concerning it. The Lord came, then, in the sim-

plicity of His power. Now, while the Son did quicken in His life whom He would, yet He takes not the glory, but associates His Father in it, never breaking the link which, in faith, we have with the Father, by Him specially in this matter of life. Our Lord was accustomed to be heard, and accustomed therefore to look to be heard. A groan in the *perception* of difficulty is often power in it. It has but its power in the groan; and the eyes will follow thoughtfully to that God in the secret of His love who is present in the answer of His love known in His presence. The force of 42 is in "I." It is not "knew" simply, but "*I* knew." But it was a witness to those around.

The stone Jesus had had removed, the outward power of death and woe; though useless unless the quickening power came, or it would only have exposed his corruption. The world hides this, but they leave the man dead. But the Lord not only removes the actual imposed impediments, but calls forth. There are many lessons to be learned from this. It was a full manifestation of the Lord's power before many Jews in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the power of His Sonship. Hence He so prayed to the Father that they might know He acted as Son, and that the Father owned Him. But Jesus loosed him after from what was round him quickened, as the outward restraints to his coming forth when he was quickened. But the effect of all this was diversified in grace and hardening. Some believed, some went and told the priests. We have then God glorified in the Son, and known consequently as the Father; and the full deliverance in the Son from all evil shewn in the

resurrection of this poor dead man. It was an anticipative exhibition that He was "the Son of God with power." His Sonship and mission from the Father was the great point thus demonstrated and published and evidenced. His ascription to the Father, replied to in such a way, demonstrated to faith His mission as Son, that He was the Son of God having power to quicken whom He will. This closed the exhibition of witness to them. Now their enmity and judgment began.

I have most feebly brought out the bright evidence of this chapter; but I have learned most strong and blessed truths in it, healthful truths, truths of glory (and life). But I am sure there is a great deal more of it. But the leading principle is so central, and the root of all, assuming His death, that its various bearings, as contrasted with the bearings of unbelief, are, I am sure, much more large, and of fuller reference, than are at all touched on here, though the principle be most clear, and is indeed eternal life.

But there is another point of dispensation that this might have been; that is, if faith had been in man, if accepting power had been, that is. It might have been the bringing in the Kingdom, supposing the Lord had been received and lived with. The quickening, sustaining power of His life was competent to sustain them in life. He that kept His saying should never see death: the expression is, "he shall in no wise see death for ever." This He testified of there. Here we find the power in which the dead saints could be raised, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, had it so pleased Him, be called into the Kingdom of

God. And this [is] a material point; it was no deficit of living power.

We have noticed, I believe, the full recognition of our Lord in His three great characteristic points: Son of God here; then King, the Son of David; then Head of the heathen, but this in attractive power by death. The whole order of the Gospel we have been pursuing is very plain; iii., the general character and Kingdom not yet manifested; iv., its extension by the Spirit taking the worst; to wit, the humiliation of Jesus, and the gift of the Spirit in life, and therefore to any, the stranger, the Samaritan, the worthless one; v., life and light as contrasted with the Law, but in quickening power; vi., His flesh broken, the bread of life contrasted, as life-giving humiliation, with kingly power, so love; vii., the union of the Spirit contrasted with the joy, the universal joy, of that Feast of Tabernacles in which He (the Lord) should be shewn to the world, the King, the Blesser; this is what He was then; viii., His word's rejection; ix., the power of His work manifest to the simplest and most needy by its operation; its rejection; then, x., His sheep called out, that is, God's purpose, and what He would do *further*, and His discussion with the Jews in the assertion of who He was thereupon, and their final confirmed rejection of them; then the exhibition of His real power and title in the which He was rejected, as we have here traced it; and after discussion upon it, from chap. xii., what He was to His disciples thus rejected. This we reserve until we come there, by the Lord's mercy.

But if the Spirit of life was shewn in Jesus, the spirit of murder was to be shewn in them, that the whole

Israel of God might be absorbed into His Person. Hence their whole character was fully exhibited, not only personally, morally, but as to their own national dispensation.

We have now the public act of the Jewish nation, and the position in which they were ; for they called a council, saying, " What shall we do ? " Then there is the full avowal and acknowledgment : " This Man doeth many miracles." What shall we do ? because He does many miracles ; and, while they confess the universal effect on the minds of the people, they shew (as far as they were concerned, for the Lord's love remained unchanged ; but these men were witness,) that they had no power : " The Romans will come." The great word, " I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people " ; " There shall not a man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." Now it was not God's place, God's nation, but " our place," " our nation." Jesus had been rejected. They had no God in faith. They practically denied, unconsciously denied, they had any God, saying " our place," " our nation " ; while they infatuatedly assumed it to themselves ; and as they have no God in devotion, in acknowledgment, they have confessedly no God in defence : " The Romans will come." They rejected " this Man " that " doeth many miracles."

Such is the melancholy picture of this blinded people. We may remark, too, that great as the effort at Babel not to be scattered, [it] produced the scattering ; so their effort to keep out the Romans by sacrificing Christ brought them in in desolating power ; and this observe, in the confession of His doing many miracles. The present

destruction of their moral polity is also manifest: "The High Priest of *that year*." Who ever heard of such a thing? But they were wrapped up in their own selfishness, with the assumption of power. This was their position, and Christ rejected! It was therefore "expedient"; therefore there was no reference to right and wrong. There was the confession, too, they had no power of preservation. They could not refer to what evidence there was of God in "this Man," because they had no God. This is one of the great characteristics of apostasy. The whole scene is demonstrative of this great point of the position of the nation.

We must not pass by the force of "*huper*" (for) here, which some have cavilled at. Its application as to this point is obvious. "But this he spoke not from himself." This is a remarkable instance of how far the over-ruling of God's Spirit can go, of the human mind, without any association with its moral state. The Spirit of God made this witness of the apostasy of his nation speak their disposition or his wisdom to murder Messiah, as a prophecy of the purpose of His death as regards the nation he represented. So, may we add, was God affianced to the Jewish people, turning the principle of their curse into the witness of their blessing, and making them in their rejection of Him and His Christ His witness (for they still represented the Jew) of the infiniteness of His blessing to them; we may add, to the children of God, sinners of the Gentiles, the supremacy of His love, His intrinsic love to them, from the declaration of blessing through their sin, making their lie abound to His glory. O happy people

in such a case! Blessed, blessed in Jehovah their God, the God of salvation.

The Jew must speak God's mind to witness to His love and salvation, though his thoughts had wandered far away. The Apostle still keeps up the witness to the great accompanying truth that not only this love to the Jews led the purposes of God, but opening the door to others, yea, for the gathering in from among (for now He is the Head of His people, the Gatherer of His sheep) the Gentiles, the sheep, the children of God which were scattered abroad.

Here alone the term "children of God" is used to [of ?] those who may be supposed to be unconverted. But it is what men might call a sort of error of expression, but rests on this, that it applies to the gathering which must look at them as converted, as children of God, which we are by faith in Christ Jesus. It could not be said *to convert* the children of God; to gather them you may, for that assumes in thought that they are children of God, though it goes out and seeks them in their unconverted state, and brings them in, and gathers them converted, the children of God.

In this little sentence, then, we have the conversion of the wickedness of man into the purpose of God; His abiding identity of love with the Jews in spite of their apostasy, and yet in the wickedness of the act of theirs, then thus apostate, opening the door in Jesus's death, and gathering in the people of His grace, wheresoever scattered. The whole order of the Divine counsel is opened out in all its application, and over-ruling the hand and mind of the Jew, and the purpose and mind of God:

"he prophesied." His hand (that is, God's) was in it. The purpose is fully opened in *v.* 52. But there is much to be learned in every letter of this; for it is not, Not for the nation, but, etc.; but, "not for the nation only, but that also." Its present purpose was the Church, Jew or Gentile. The full purpose was "not for that nation only," etc. So we find fully confirmed the Jewish application of Isaiah liii.; and the prophetic character attached to Caiaphas, as noticed above, as exhibiting that point, is fully confirmed and established. And, indeed, on the whole, it is a remarkable synoptical view of the whole counsel of God just in its place, when the actings of the Jewish purpose, on the rejection of the Lord, began to be developed and expressed as coming from the heart of man. God over-rules them, and says, These are Mine. It was on the rejection of Christ by His nation, and a full development of the characteristic testimony or revelation of this Gospel, and gives the mind of God, that we may see it through the sorrow, before. The blessed Lamb (to Him be all honour, to whom it is due) was led to the slaughter in the accomplishment of it, that we might see Him there, and the just stamp of honour on Him, as in our affections. For He "walked no more . . . among" them.

We have, moreover, in detail the peculiar character and stamp of this dispensation in purpose: gathering *into one the children of God.* He died negatively, so to speak, for the world; that is, the purpose effected in dispensation is this gathering together in one the children of God. The world ought to have obeyed. But compare Eph. i. 9, 10. This was the result of rejection; for the

children of God, through grace, would rather have Him rejected than the world received: that the result of full purpose in glory as passing by rejection; for God is glorified in all His ways. I do not enter here into the order; for the Church ought to have taken it in this order. It may be seen in Romans xi., and again in Psalm xcv. 9. But we pass on to the chapter.

Jesus' ministry just met the process of their unbelief. They took counsel to destroy. In the wisdom of God they had their own counsel. He walked no more openly amongst them. Jesus retires from unbelief. They perhaps had so far care, yet not care; and whatever they had was the care of destruction approaching. I believe this is indeed typical, and exhibitory of the position in which Jesus will be (and in a certain sense is) previous to His real entering into Jerusalem in kingly power; not having left but hanging on the borders of His people, as now hid in God till the day of His appearing. So will He abide then with His disciples, though more unknown. The attention of the people still fixed upon Him, whatever thoughts were in the rulers. The accomplishment of the Passover will be in the deliverance of the Jews. The offering of the Lamb was now, and they on whom the blood was preserved, they (owning it) will be brought through then in full deliverance, as through the sea, though many may think the wilderness has shut them in. Jesus then, having intermediately continued in the wilderness, draws near to Jerusalem.

These facts I have stated I believe to be typical, save the sufferings which were now accomplished, unless in sympathy. And so they will be delivered. The power

of that will be to the Jews in that day, as well as the power of the Kingship, although the act on which it rested was now accomplished in their sin. The people were in uncertainty. There was the general sense of the rulers' determination. But "the spiritual man is judged of no man." They knew not the simplicity in which Jesus pursued without reference to man the Father's will, and in which therefore was brought out (as in us often, without knowing how; in Him perfectly) all the mind of the Father's glory. Wherever we act in circumstances in the Father's will (that is, on Jesus's way and commandments) there all the bright results of the Father's counsels are stamped upon us; yea, if it be going into the wilderness (or Gaza, being desert), if the wilderness is our place.

But the cup of the Lord's sorrow was not yet filled up, and it must be made full, and, most blessed Master and Lord! drunk of necessity in Thy love, the necessity of Thy love, in obedience and love. Not that the prince of this world had anything in Him. The people might be at ease in the temple, and Jesus in the wilderness, or in Ephraim. But this was still the patience of service, however degrading. The scene, as to their moral state, was really closed; but Jesus could take no step to throw up the service, not waiting on the Lord's will. This was most humbling; but Jesus in all things emptied Himself. He waited the Lord's will and His leisure, and all His glory (in Headship) flowed from it. There was one thing yet necessary, an enemy within. Let us see the circumstances in which the last sad,

bitter drop was put into human suffering, and to us most shameful.

Note, also, how remarkably the *power* of death is brought out in John xi. Thomas, to that obedience, the Jews, Martha, Mary, and all the circumstances to give the full character and power of death over the spirit.

Chapter XII.

A little, but most deeply affecting, scene is then brought out: Christ at His burial supper. For now the Lord let in upon His thoughts and mind the path He was treading, that we might see Him in the meekness of the prepared Lamb; and this last circumstance brought out on the secret of the treachery of Judas shewn before, casting its shadow before, in the path the Lord was treading. He well knew what He was entering on; for this is the deepest mystery. We do not dwell, nor could Christ dwell upon it: "If it were an open enemy, I could have borne it." Oh, it was a sad, sad hour! (see xiii. 21).

We dwell on the circumstances. It was the place where Lazarus was, that Lazarus that was

dead, whom Jesus raised from the dead. There He was called to supper. Lazarus? Strange scene! the Lord sitting in the sense of what He was; and Lazarus was there. Martha served, willing, but according to her custom. (Oh! keep us near thee, Lord, in heart, the nature of our service). Mary! the memory of whose love is fragrant, as the burial ointment of the Lord, in the remembrance of His disciples, filling the house; for love to Him does fill the house even now. It is very precious, this ointment, this grace of love; and all is on Jesus. She, however poorly, would thus express it, and she anointed His feet with the nard, and wiped it with the hairs of her head.

Strange to many! but the Lord, the perfect Lord, knew where it was applied; yea, He knew whence it came; the sweet savour of the Father's witness of love; the beauty of the pearl of great price was in it. He was a skilful merchant to know His Father's love was there; it was balm, love poured of God the Father into the heart of this poor woman, that it might reach the heart of Christ in the woundings of the house of His friends. And the love was suited here; it was the return of grace; and treachery for the moment lost its baseness; that is, it was soothed in the balm of this love; the wound lost its pain.

"Let her alone." With her and them He was occupied; not with him only; for, indeed, they were all (but for saving grace) in the same state; and He is now before us as generally deserted, even by His disciples. He speaks as driven into His own grace, and finding it here; though justly addressed to one here, as recorded of the

Apostle, who could in the same grace separate : "She hath kept this." She could have spent it on Him before ; and it might have gone ; His heart would not have spared it to the poor ; but the Father's love in her, she, and in the estimation of God, though we know in ourselves whence it is, had kept this for His burial. Nothing can be more exquisitely beautiful. And be at rest, says the blessed Redeemer, "Ye have the poor," if ye be so anxious, "always with you" ; let this little token be spent on Me, this token of love : "Me ye have not always." Oh ! the meekness of beauty which in so awful a bitterness of evil thus in Divineness of grace cherishes only, and justifies for this poor woman, this token of love. (Lord, may we bow at Thy feet, and shew the odour of our love to Thee, that while we think of Thee, the bowels of Thy saints may be refreshed by it and Thee). Such is the balm for evil in the world, Christ's comfort in apostasy : "She hath done what she could."

Note also, where there is simple love and devotedness, how the Lord directs into conduct which, from its perfect suitableness of affection, the Lord recognizes as the expression of the sympathetic thoughtfulness of love : "She hath kept it for My burial." Now, she had had it long time ; then she might (and we are assured, was willing to) have spent it on the Lord Jesus ; but the Lord ordered that she should keep it to that fitting moment when it was in effect the soothing expression of thoughtful affection. How graciously ordered from on high ! "It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with the hairs of her head." So says the beloved disciple.

Now, Martha loved Him, and the Lord loved her. She served before, and she served now. But this was not what personal affection called for now, though accepted. Into this Mary was led in knowledge (nay, but by the Lord of knowledge), though by affection; and the Lord interpreted it according to its real value from the Lord upon her. And so are we, and shall be, led (when there is this suitableness, simplicity, of affection) by the Spirit into right acts of suitable affection, when we wait upon it, upon the Lord; for He directs, unseen, every step.

This opened the scene of deliberate apostasy, the touching scene of Christ's comfort in it: not from His disciples; though no traitors, through His grace. And under what circumstances! what cutting consciousness of the mad ungratefulness of the apostasy! His anointing for burial going on in the presence of him whom He had just raised as from "by this time he stinketh"; and the seeds of apostasy now breaking out; but withal the fragrance of love to His soul. Well, too, might it be said (oh! sad, yet blessed word to them to all): "Ye have killed the Prince of life."

But the purpose of the priests was resolute, formed in evil. They sought to put Lazarus to death, because the Jews therefore went and believed on Jesus. What a testimony! But they were deserted by it. (Lord, may I be deserted wherever any of Thy children have more grace, more of Thee to know and feed upon. But let it not be so if it seemest to Thee food. May they surely be fully fed, know what cannot be known, the blessed fulness which is in Thee from God).

These, observe, were of the Jews. It would appear from that, "*hupeegon*" (were going away), that they went away, and consorted with the Lord so far; that is, as going to Him. They went and believed on Him, so that there was a multitude with Him; and a multitude met Him because they heard that He had done these things. The others were convinced, it is to be supposed, *seeing* Lazarus, for "a great crowd of Jews . . . came . . . that they might see." On the morrow a great multitude, "having heard . . . took." But when there was none to know Jesus, the Lord had prepared a testimony; for (which is important to remark) His disciples did not understand these things at the first; they, as free from looking for it, were ignorant of it all. The testimony was from the Lord upon the hearts of the people. This was His testimony then of love in the treachery of His disciple, if the honour of the people in *their* ignorance. "Hosanna," said the multitude. He must have the honour. His disciples are always last to give it. The little they have received has so implicated their own minds, they are so occupied with the circumstances they are placed in by it, that they are incapable, unfit to see further, and bear this witness. But they receive it, and they who are no self-willed witnesses, bear testimony alike to their Master and to them. The world went after Him: part with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, part meeting Him because they heard it.

The multitude were witnesses to Him. Thus it was that God provided testimony to His Son. Note also His Kingship of Israel. His Sonship of David depends on His resurrection power. So Paul (Acts xiii. 34). But

the Lord gave this testimony to this part of His character also: "Hosanna to the King of Israel, who comes," etc. It was an external testimony; but that was immaterial here, yea, it was in spite of all the opposition of His nation, and therefore the more powerful, so that the Pharisees said to themselves, "Perceive ye that ye prevail nothing? lo, the world is gone after Him." And so it shall be. It is upon the exaltation of Him to be King of Israel, that is, the multitude of Israel owning Him to be King of Israel, that the world shall go after Him, as the resurrection is the ground of their faith now. We shall see what follows.

This was the second seal put upon Him, or rather the first, for the raising of Lazarus was the intrinsic proof from Himself who He was; this the consequence. In the meanwhile the love of the Remnant comforted Him; nor must we omit the willing service, though less attached, of Martha.

The second result, I mean further typical result, followed. There were certain Greeks (note, *Hellenes*) who came up to worship at the feast, this Feast of Passover, alike the witness of the suffering of the Lamb, which was the power and the deliverance, which was the result to the Jews (and what followed). Bethsaida was connected with Galilee (*hagoiim*, the nations). These Greeks came and asked, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." It seemed a strange event; natural association gave, however, the occasion to forward it to Jesus. Philip tells Andrew. He also, with Peter, was of Bethsaida; and they tell, acquiring thus strength, Jesus.

But here the glory of Jesus was, manifestly, broke forth. It was but a small thing that He should be God's Servant to restore the preserved of Israel; but He should be for a Light to the Gentiles. Glory was to come in here. He was to inherit the praise of Israel. Therefore the Lord says, "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified." "I will make Him," saith the scripture, "the Head of the heathen; higher than the kings of the earth"; "the glory of His people Israel." But He knew there was that which must come in first. He knew it well in the witness of truth that was in His soul. But He knew it in sorrow for Israel. For all this witness comes in after Israel had rejected Him. Alas! sad truth; but that which He wept over shall surely rise to joy; for, watered with His tears, if it tarry long because of righteousness to Him, shall because of righteousness to Him, and His righteousness, spring up the fruitful seed and harvest of His long sorrow. He shall come again with joy, and bring, not only the sheaves of His risen harvest, but Jerusalem risen from her ashes, the blessed and joyous proof that His tears, Christ's tears, were not shed in vain over Jerusalem, any more than over Lazarus. It is for His sake. The witness is in His love; and so it is in Isaiah xlix. on this very topic. They shall learn that it is because of Him; they shall join their tears, and come with weeping, though they shall return with joy, and joy shall be upon them then, the [millennial ?] age.

The King of Israel might have been received. This was the glorifying of the Son of Man. Other thoughts were necessary here; yet in dispensation the rejection of

Israel preceded it. Yet [that] this was the place of His reception, His portion, was plain. Well, He felt what Israel was doing, and what portion He had to take. He speaks [of] it here. The Gentiles did but shew where it tended, what was all to come; glory indeed, but the glory of a rejected Jew, of a crucified Saviour, Lord; yet the glory of the Son of Man; for it must be by death. The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. This was witnessed in the coming in of the Gentiles; for they were to come to the light, the reception of Jesus by the Jews, which was here in a certain sense wrought, in the witness, that is, of God. But indeed He was rejected by them as to present corporate character; and then the great necessity of God came in: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat falling into the ground die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." The Lord, the Son of Man, would have been a good corn of wheat, one fit for the husbandman, the Lord non-impeachable in beauty and worth. But to produce fruit it must die, die by the dispensations of God, die *because sin had entered into the world*, because no sinner could be brought with Him then into the Father's house, to God. He must die to be a risen Head of redemption. Men were, He knew they were [dead]. They had proved themselves so, simply such. He must abide alone. Then there could be no quickened sinner but on the forgiveness of sins; none without the cleansing of it by His blood. They were dead then; their works were dead works, not service of the living God. They must die to what they were alive in, that

they might live to what they were dead to in trespasses and sins.

Christ was alone in this matter, and He must die alone. Sinless among sinners, what fellowship could He have with them as alive, risen? He could bring life in love to them, having died for them, and sorrow, though it were to die from them; yet not be alone then, and the Sent Source of life. It was righteousness to God, too. Thus, alone, He was justified in thought towards man, and His love made righteous way for; yea, made by this of Jesus the very glory of His character. As for reprobate, sinful, Jesus-rejecting man, He must die. As for God, He must die too; a solitary place; yet not quite, yet so alone. Yet His Father's love quite upon Him: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because," etc. And yet quite alone; alone, to His own incommunicable glory, where none else ever was: the ark of the Covenant in the waters of Jordan, parted hither and thither till His people had all passed over.

Note. This is truly given so far, but very imperfectly. It seems to identify the glory of the *world's* inheritance with the ascended glory, the absolute glory of the Christ, the glory of the Son of Man. This is very blessed. It makes the rejected glory the highest; the poor rejected Gentiles identified with the unsearchable glory of Christ. Nothing but that could bring them in, and they are as it were made first by it. The world all along is John's subject; and Christ treats even the Jews as of it in their place (as Jer. xxiv.), the Son of Man taking even death, the full result, on Him; yet herein having all the glory of glorifying God, and inheriting for man. It was

universal glory, too, which is indeed glory; but its union, that is, Son of Man's glory (here spoken of) with the height of all personal and Divine glory, in and of that in which God made to be glorified, is most blessed, and hence the bearing of the following passage (*v.* 32).

The other glory was official, as it were, though righteous, or, as Son of God, personal power; but here, being thrown into the full question in death, He rises vindicatively over all evil into the fulness of all glory, for He had gone to the uttermost of evil. Hence the other glory (save the power of His Person) was mediate; that is, Adam having ruined everything in sin, intermediate dispensations met no constancy in man, nor power to receive (being evil) the exercise of that power as sustaining these. They rejected Him. But now He takes it up in the full result of Adam's evil, and assumes it in the constancy of His own glory, from which the stability of all these might stand in grace; not from the weakness of the first Adam, but the honour and glory of the Second, who embraced them all, having indeed in Person fulfilled them all, through the surrounding weakness before; but now to take it, having borne all the results of their evil in weakness, in the glory of His Son of Manship, responsible as from Adam, but victorious in fulness of responsibility. It was death to all into which sin had entered, corrupted. But the Jewish system was short of death; it took up the world, and found or made blessing in it. But in this there was utter failure. The power of life in it was rejected, even the Lord (Jesus); and Christ re-assumes it, not as having created in Sonship into which sin had entered,

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but in redemption, as also therein sin, being Son of Man in the responsibility. Hence also the importance of seeing Jesus as Son of God in creation, or we break the link of creation and redemption unity (see Col. i.). Then being Son of Man He is the Second Adam of the new creation, the First-born over all things, as begotten from the dead; to the Church as Head over all things (redeemed in Him) to it.

The verses thus: the Lord sees His glory in it (as before God, of course), then the necessity of death: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die"; the necessity as regards His followers, the moral truth: "He that loveth his life," which goes forth into the ruined, sin-possessed world, "shall lose it: he that hateth it in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Those acting for Jesus find this distinction: "He that will serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am," the simplest result, "there shall My servant be," blessed in the privilege of sonship, but necessarily to follow Jesus through death, the path He went; one morally life, the other being where Jesus is, as in Matt. v. and 1 Peter iii. and iv. But note, lest we should think it a meritorious exertion, the principles are identified in Matt. xvi.

In Christ, "What shall I say?" brings out perfectness: "Father, save Me from this hour"; in us the groan of weakness, it may be, but still well known, as His groan to God also. There is great blessedness in this: "Father, glorify Thy name"; for it is and must be all blessedness to us. It is a Father's, our Father's, name which is to be glorified. Let the need of our submission be what it may, it would not be greater than

Christ's. He perceives the glory beforehand, sees the necessity associated with it; bows in perfect submission, going down into the valley of humiliation, yea, to the very darkness of death in obedience, and lives to see the glory distinctly which He had seen across the chasm. So even we, though we know the way down, always see glory in result while in the valley; but it is the way to it. He saw the glory in Himself; first, "that the Son of Man," etc., as generally in result; afterwards as connected with death and His triumph over all, the prince of this world cast out; in John xvi. judged, because that is the Spirit's testimony; here cast out, for this is Jesus', the Son's, work.

The glory of this bore much fruit. Observe how our Lord reflects upon it, adducing the well-ordered illustration. But how Divine it was thus to speak of Himself, in the sure prospect that His death in power and God's appointment would bring forth all the result! Strange, looked at as suffering it! How beautifully it rises on His glory! how painfully sure in its necessity! Yet how meekly does He enter into the way of it! His meek heart takes from the witness of His glory its truth in necessity from God and from man, resurrection necessity; but how low and how lowly! Not a craving thought! The glory does but make Him think of the death. He took no glory; death was His glory, as a Man among sinners, as bowing to the necessity of God. Yet what vast, what infinite obedience, when we remember who He was! Conceive such a sentence in that which goes before. He saw, acquiesces, and pleads the principle, but a principle of necessity, necessity imposed

upon Him (yet nothing which made His glory); yet imposed so that He must go down, *obedient* unto death, even the death of the Cross. Strange, yet glorious! for it is alone; there is nought like it; it is in this the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified. Ah! how I see His glory shining through this way of the Cross! yet not separate from His Father; yet that which was inseparably from the Father; yet inseparably His own; for the Divinity of the Son is preserved in the incommunicable glories of His Manhood acts. If the Father had not been, then He could not have died in love; and yet it was exclusively the Son who did it in Person, and that in unity with the Father, and yet as Man in obedience, in marvellous humiliation, "for no man knoweth the Son but the Father." But we pursue not this further here.

The Lord applies the principle, "He who loves his life shall lose it; and he who hates his life in this world," a world of sin, is kept aloof from the associations of it, "shall keep it unto life eternal." It is morally right in its objects, but it must die to the world. This we do in Jesus; but then, being alive by and to Him in resurrection, we keep it (hating the evil, the sign of the new life,) unto life eternal. It was obedience, and Christ had eternal life by it. He that would follow Him must follow Him in the same path. The life to God is resurrection life; and, first, because we are dead; secondly, because we must die, as alive without the Law, not subject to it; in a word, have to die to sin as dead in it, because of the resurrection of Christ, in which we have the life in which we can do it. But loving the life is the life, the old will, *autarkeia*, indepen-

dent of God; hating it is in the perception of the evil, because we can live now (being right in mind) only to God. He holds it then as a free gift from God, and keeps it, for we know that which we have committed unto Him, that He is able to keep it until that day. "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am," (the consequence, though appointed, is plain,) "where I am, there shall also My servant be." I must go; so it is ordered; and am rejected. "Where I am," they wish to be. The consequence is plain.

But, "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour." The actual accomplishment is beautiful; that is, beautifully exact, though not developed here, as the results were not brought out, the way being the point in question. But they are most perfect in all their fittings. We need not develop them here, as they form the great subject of the Gospel. The force of the sentence, we may observe, is emphatic: "If any man serve *Me*, let him follow *Me*; and where *I* am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve *Me*, him will My Father honour." How beautifully and perfectly expressively does that then come in: "Now is My soul troubled"! Well might it be so "now"! The Lord lets out His feelings, which is important to observe, for we shall see the force in supplication. He shewed where His servant was to go, but it was in deep consciousness of its necessity, of where He was going, and His advice springing from that necessity closes. "*Now* is My soul troubled"; the Son of Man glorified. How does He pass from the true parabolic fact to the deep perception of it in His own soul! But this led Him to the

Father, but to perfect subjection of His will, His subjection of His will *in obedience* first.

We see how little not knowing what to pray for as we ought comes from real sin. It may be really the depth of godliness in the sense and pressure of evil, which would seek, righteously seek, to be saved from the hour, but cannot do that and bear it, and this is (if brought to it) the portion of the perception of its necessity, which causes the suffering, or there is failure. The perception is of the necessity, the unavoidable necessity, and hence there must be failure or submission to it. There would not really be the moral trial in it but from the sense of the moral necessity that is from the whole reconciliation, which implies the very thing being sin is there, which in unreconciliation must be borne in sorrow (which note well). The Lord came for this purpose. We are made (graciously, yet necessarily) partakers of His sufferings. May we indeed (Lord, grant it !) enter fully into His sufferings. We know what is given us, I believe, by this perception, though more may be given. But it is a glorious truth.

But His soul was troubled, and He knew not what to say. What He first said, though righteous, He retracted. He could not but feel ; for if He had not felt He had made no atonement ; He could not have been perfect, or anything at all. "Save Me from this hour," shewed that He knew what the hour was. It also shewed that He was by no necessity of God's ordering there, but found Himself in it with no necessity of personal subjection. Hence the rather His trouble ; for He must willingly (strange position !) subject Himself to

that which He could be free from, which seemed like madness. It was the necessity, in us of evil, in Him of love; I say, "in us of evil"; for it surely always is; for we are made perfect in this sense, not in office (for others) but in exercise for ourselves. But it is a beautiful and blessed truth. But I close for the present.

Observe, too, the difference of position in which our Lord stood; not of sympathy with others merely, but of purpose in His own soul: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." "Except a corn of wheat," etc. It was a general parabolic truth, which the Spirit taught Him concerning this glory, and any glory if He were indeed wheat. Nay, it must be acted on by any: "He that loveth his life shall lose it," and then, "If any man serve Me." But now the waterfloods had come even into His soul. He felt the position He was in. "Now," said He, emphatically, "is My soul troubled." It was not, "He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled," but "Now is My soul troubled." He knew not what to say. But what could He say righteously? "Father"; looking to Him always, perfectly, "save Me from this hour." He felt Himself in spirit in it, as indeed He was; for all were in spirit now got ready for the kindling; Judas and priests and all; which He felt now upon His soul. He looked through it into death, death for life, to go through, knowing what death was, a service; yet felt as One who had been one with the Father. Oh! strange and only grief in its nature and in fact! how was none like it! But the spirit of recollection in His obedience was the real thing at hand: "*But* for

this cause came I to this hour." It is My point to go through.

Whenever we can say this we have the point of peace, no matter what the trial. It cannot be deeper than Jesus's death, nor half so deep; and we have Jesus's strength the moment we can see that we are brought there to go through it. It is then simply blessed endurance, though trying, because we have simply to obey, and there is no failure of strength. It is exercise of will that wearies us, for there is no strength in that uncertainty of moral judgment, for there is all weakness in that. The moment we can say "for this cause" we have peace; for it is only to be gone through according to the will of God. Then the mind was at rest; but it could have higher aspirations; it was the Father's will, the thing to be done, and in its trial it could say (turning it into that, making in submission the Father, as it were, a debtor; for it was voluntary indeed in Him; yet the expression was simply the rest of patience, the holy expression of what was upon His heart): "Father, glorify Thy name."

But what a change! *the Father to be glorified* out of what He prayed to be delivered from! Marvellous are the progress of our thoughts, when we pass from our thoughts to His ways. There came a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." How is a Father's name glorified? It is His own glory, indeed, in His dealings towards a Son. Now, I have doubted whether this applied to the first Adam, in whom the Father was glorified in his created perfect-

ness, the "son of God," so called, fresh from the great Artificer's hand; and, behold, it was very good. Creation glorified the Father, so that all the sons of God shouted for joy at the Father's glory; or rather at those first temptations of our Lord, in which, where our first Adam utterly failed, and thus dishonoured God, Christ the Lord, "the Lord from heaven," had fully stood. No spot or flaw could Satan find or procure in Him, nor yielded to him, in which he could charge folly, or any thing, on the Second Adam; that which stood as the Son of God, but that which glorified God the Father. He could not skill of such wisdom how in, to him, a creature, Man, and as to the abstract of the nature he met, he found no inlet for his craft, but simplicity, and therefore perfectness, which held him all without, while it understood all his ways, and yet was obedient to the Father. This was skill beyond his, all the perfectness of the Son; and the Father glorified His name. But indeed this was specially the Son's glory, but God was glorified in Him, "simple concerning evil," for God was in Him, and "wise concerning that which was good," with a wisdom that had no folly, but while it was all obedience, was apart from all folly, from all evil; and these two are partly one, for, had it not been for Christ, God would have been in fact only dishonoured by Adam's nature, by Adam's act, though it were his own fault.

But now He was honoured far more than otherwise; but He glorified it surely again in the resurrection; had there in the Son, "marked out Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by resurrec-

tion of the dead." God was glorified as the Father. Therefore he says, "Like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." For "like as" indeed it was; the Son's glory, being the Son; so was it the Father's glory; all too He being a Man, and thus the glory went to God the Father, for He (the Son) emptied Himself. In His dealings with the Son, as with Adam, He glorified His name. But this was for others, for it witnessed to the response of the Father to the Son, that we might know it. Not that the Son needed it. He knew His Father's love. He was stablished too in obedience; neither needed He the certainty that it would be so. It was not for that, but in the simplicity, perfectness, of His own faithfulness, for the love He bore the Father, that He said, "Father, glorify Thy name." But could not the Father bear witness to His name? For the glory of the Father's name was His, He being the Son; and this all be for us (wondrous word!) all this "for your," for our, "sakes." What words are these! The Father glorifies Himself; that is the Son's glory; and all this for our sakes! Well may we worship in communion, but in utter humiliation before Him, knowing the Father by the Son. But the point was settled. Resurrection, that is, redemption, as well as creation, must glorify the Father's name; and, while the Son gave, He ministered or wrought, that is, in Him was wrought (as we read in chap. xvii.; also in xiii.) the glory to God and the Father.

We may remark also in connection with this that the resurrection of Lazarus did not go beyond the life as

regarded the original system of the world. There was the life of man, and the energy of that life, restored and preserved. There was no, properly speaking, that is, the change to a spiritual body till the resurrection of our blessed Lord, the first begotten from the dead. In this sense the raising of Lazarus belonged only to the original life of man, and shewed the power which the Lord possessed. Blessed for ever be His name, and glorified with the Father in every way over it! This glorifying of the Father's name past included the raising of Lazarus in the power of the Adamic life, sustained, as quickened, by the power of the Son of God, and thus in it properly was the Father's name glorified, in respect of Adam and his life.

From the resurrection of our Lord we have the resurrection life of the Second Adam as the portion of the Church. As to the other, they are not as Lazarus, quickened but dead (which note); for it opens out wide and plain doctrine. Nor will the Church therefore be ever known but in resurrection state; therefore the Apostle, Phil. iii.; though now witnessed in resurrection power by the Spirit of God. This is mainly the argument of the First Epistle of Peter; and hence the anomalous position and impossibility of present perfection of the Church, that it is in resurrection principle in an unresurrection state. But our business is with the power of life, reckoning the other dead. Not it, however, alive, which it shall be in other sort. The first glory of the Father closed its exhibition in the resurrection of Lazarus; the second commenced in the resurrection of Christ; and I doubt whether there

be not a wider application of this difference, and with fuller results than men suppose; for the sustaining power of Christ being withdrawn, Lazarus was liable to die again, which shews the difference; though it was as to its results, not to its intrinsic character, I alluded before. "But they that are counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry," etc.; "neither do they die any more, but are as the Angels," etc. But all power of life was in Jesus the Son of God, for it was God's life. Doubtless the result shall be all alike; for the power of God is supreme and beyond our reach in these matters; for we have Lazarus raised thus naturally, and the Lord Jesus eating in a spiritual body, and Moses temporarily introduced to us as in glory, talking with Jesus as in glory, and Elias; though one was changed, the other unraised, and the Lord in a body afterwards conversant among men. We know that we shall not all die, but all be changed. Nor do I say, while all are in the Kingdom, what "the spirits of just men made perfect" may have peculiarly as their place; nor, though it shews much more, do I say how far the Transfiguration shews the various forms of this. Generally it does. However, generally, Lazarus was the power of Christ in the life which was previous to resurrection, though exhibiting the same *power*, though not the same form, which belonged to resurrection. It is further illustrated in the changed ones.

I have only alluded to this subject here, as flowing from this resurrection and the expression "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again"; for I apprehend

the former glorifying was in the Son's power as regarded the Adamic life in Lazarus: "The glory of God; and that the Son of God," etc. For it is indeed through the Son the Father is glorified, as the Son by and through the Father. So in the resurrection of Jesus, He was determined, "*marked out* as the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness." This in death therefore in Himself, that in exercised power therefore on a naturally dead man; for there is no holiness properly but in resurrection and its power, the great characteristic of the truth now. And so was He "raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." It is indeed the great secret of the gospel. It was withal by His power, and therefore declared or shewn to be the Son of God with power, power to lay down, power to take again, a new special power. That He should restore life was intelligible; that is, with God, as His prerogative. Himself to lay it down, and take it again, was quite new. Death is the principle of Christianity, resurrection its power: even the "God that quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that be not as though they were."

I believe I have given the general view of the sentence from the Lord: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." In life is He glorified, as the Son of Man was glorified in death; that is, the Father's name is glorified in living children; God in the moral attributes of His character shining forth ultimately in this. The sentence here is plain. It is the Father's name is glorified; first, in the sustaining life, in Christ, of His sons; secondly, the resurrection life in which He would glorify it again. The sound of God is heard by all His

words, by those only to whom it is addressed. So with Saul.

There was no knowledge of the Father, no real recognition of God, or surely they ought to have recognized, in such an answer to such a prayer, the hand of God. They saw the wonder in answer to "Father, glorify Thy name," and they said, "An Angel spake," or, "It thundered." If God gave His thunder, it was God, even the Highest, that answered to the word, "Father, glorify Thy name." Well might the Lord, the Son of Man, say, "This voice came not for Me," He needed no such evidence, "but for your sakes." They thought it was for His; at least, "An Angel spake to Him"; for "now is the judgment of this world," that you may see even from the Father's voice where the crisis rests, even in the rejection (unto death, the great point in question, that by death He might overcome death, etc.) of Me. Observe, the world (a prophet could not perish out of Jerusalem, but indeed that was but a circumstance, aye, and a forgivable circumstance too, as we know; but the world) cast Him out. Its state was proved herein, in its guilt, whose control it was under; but it was in the power of this very glorifying of the Father, whence all by the Son, the casting out of the prince of it.

But the ruler of it was then cast out, excommunicated from his world into his nothingness of intrinsic evil in the presence of God. It was the great result of the Father's glory, the Son's power. But the fact is what is stated here, and the honour is the Son of Man's: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw." Satan had ruled over the world. In death, that is, in the death of Jesus, he lost his power,

and it became the attractive power to all those who had been under his rule, the rule of death. The connection of the world as under his rule, in sin, of death, and of Satan, are here most fully developed. The rejection and death of Christ proved it. The subsequent defeats of the power of Satan are but results of this, a recurrence to resurrection power.

Further, as Satan was here cast out in the very point (this the faithful love to God and man of Jesus, the only Son of God, and Man) where men were under and subject to it, this, the witness of their deliverance, should be the attractive point *also* to them, previously under its and his power. First, the world in crisis judged in itself, the power of its death taken away in Christ. Secondly, the prince of it cast out in power *in toto*. Next, consequently, this very point in which he had seemed to triumph evidencing the Saviour's love in submitting to it, the point of their necessity, the attractive point to all men. His lifting up was the witness in the world of this, His subjection to Satan, to death, and to the consequences in judgment of sin in which they were lying. I say, the witness lifted up in the world, the attractive point to all; for He is not speaking here of the operations of the Spirit, to wit, of God, but of the acts of the Son of Man in death, as the Apostle states, and the Spirit teaches. This is the attractive point to all; the cords of a man to them that had been sinning even with a cart rope.

It is a most important sentence, and cannot be studied too much. Let us see that it is the act of the Son of Man, and that to which with His glory the Spirit too bears witness. It was "from the earth," for the earth was

all polluted (and it was consequently "all men," as contrasted with the Jewish people, this was the way of drawing all men), could not bear the burthen of the Son of God upon it, the convicting witness of His presence. But thus in death was a point where men could go. In His bloodshedding out of it they should find it life. I repeat it, there cannot be a more important sentence. But the Lord's own spirit was passing through it, though sent for them. Blessed, cheering witness was it to the Son that His Father's name should be glorified. His heart rejoiced in it. He felt the truth in Himself, and as Son of Man. It had been, "Now is My soul troubled," but passing through perfect submission and righteousness in seeking the Father's glory, it emerged, through the truth of His death, into the blessed results of His own love and righteous power therein: "I, if I be lifted up." Such is the course always of our true joy.

The people went back to the Law: "We have heard that Christ abideth ever." They understood the word that the Son of Man must be lifted up. Who, they ask, is the Son of Man? But the Lord's mind had passed on in its own thoughts fully drawn out, the thoughts of all this scene, and He returned to the present testimony to them, but ordered upon this present truth: "A little while the light is with you." Two propositions He puts to them: "Walk in the light while ye have the light." They, the people of the Jews, the darkness was coming, and seizing on them, they would not know where they were going. "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the *children of the light*," even to the

Jew as such then, His present duty ; the other leading to that effulgence of the light which, believing on it as intrinsically in them there, should shine forth on them as children of it in the resurrection.

"These things He spake, and, departing, hid Himself from them." Gracious words! Suitable words! Words of present, conscious love! but little heeded; and He knew, though He desired not that, yea, though He had done so many miracles, but it did but fulfil the word of the prophet which He had spoken. The evidence was plain enough, but therefore they could not believe, for Esaias said again, "He hath blinded their eyes." See the notes on this chapter, and compare 2 Corinthians iv. Even so the veil was not upon the glory, but on their minds, as well as their eyes, and much worse too, in the risen glory as there, though the same in fact; for "these things said Esaias, when he saw *His glory*," to wit, even of Jehovah of hosts, "and spake of Him." But this was the real secret, however: "Through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles": to "draw all" to Him. The testimony here was quite plain, yet, indeed, many of the rulers believed on Him, but the moral principle of the Son of God's glory only had no power over their hearts. They were convinced to their guilt, not converted, but proved to be blinded against God, setting up to be as it were gods, the centres of their own power and consequence. No such heart can, in that state, receive Christ.

The Lord therefore set it altogether on this ground. But oh! how truly is this self-glory, subtle self-glory, the ground and essence of unbelief. (Lord, so shew us

Thy glory, that we may be delivered from it.) It must be a question with Him that sent Me. You cannot reject Me without rejecting Him. "He that believes Me believes Him that sent Me." He leads His followers to God, and their hearts rested in themselves; and "he that sees Me sees Him that sent Me." I come not for glory, nor to condemn, which I might do, seeking it for My rejection. I am come for the world's sake, "a Light into the world, that whosoever believes on Me might not be in darkness," its Servant, to bear a light to, and constantly to, him, that he might not remain in darkness, where the world is now. But "God is light"; therefore He came. If a man hear, and do not believe, *I* do not judge him. I came for a very different purpose; for no such purpose I have; that I came "to *save* the world." "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings" (they were sayings of God), the truth, the word I have spoken, the matter and truth of it, "shall judge him at the last day." He shall be shewn to have essentially rejected God, for what I have said has essentially recommended itself to his conscience.

Compare Paul's account of his ministry, as above; and hence it is that the word still becomes condemning, though Jesus be not here in Person. Its authority too, so coming, should condemn such a one; *he has*, observe, (compare the fact in verse 42) what judges him; the word he has; which I spoke, which I know he has, for I know it was witness, being in power to his conscience; it shall judge him in the last day; "for I have not spoken of Myself" [*ex emautou*; here not *ap'emautou* from myself]; that is, the word has had a deeper source

than you suppose, as from a man ; but "the Father that sent Me, He gave Me" (for He is resting, you see, on the matter, *logos*, of what He said,) "commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" ; My diction, that is, as well as the things. They were God's words, as John the Baptist said. And He knew that His commandment, the thing declared in its declaration, *entolee*—(so in, "this charge I commit unto thee" ; and, "The end of the commandment" ; in both instances the matter and ministration of the gospel)—"is eternal life." "The things therefore I speak, as He has said to Me, so I speak."

There are several words here and elsewhere of different signification ; the matter of His speech, *logos* ; His speech or expressions, *laleō* and *lalia* ; the charge given to Him of it, *entolee*, *eipon*, etc., to tell or speak in this sense, declare ; and *eireeke*, communicated to one, address to or say, to open a person's mind to another.

Let us note here, before we close, the various manners in which mortal men, or death or liability to it is presented, that we may see the variety of living power over it : Elias ; Moses ; the Lord ; Lazarus ; and the disciples : "If a man keep My saying," etc. ; but particularly the former, for it is a great mystery concerning this power of life in the Son of God, and one manifested in their ways. It is not known what became of Moses' body, save that God buried it ; a great honour put upon it ; though not such as Elias, for it would not have suited his mission. Thus therefore it was ordered. But we know that Satan sought to have it ; but the Lord did not, it seems, suffer it, but buried it according to His

wisdom, that none knew it save He; which note, for it meets this point; for our knowledge of the living power of God is very small, quickening or preserving in Christ Jesus, according to His will. Let us learn it here as far as revealed.

We have, it appears to me, a definite witness of our Lord's remanifestation in resurrection state and fulness in that word noticed: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again"; and hence was the difficulty that hung over it when there noticed. Christ manifested the full glory of the Father in respect of His claim on the first Adam, or more properly the first Adam's subjection to the Law, and victory over death in Lazarus; and, "If a man keep My saying." Adam was exhibited in nature "the son of God." He came directly from God: "the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God." But in this sonship he wholly failed. We know our failure. The Lord took us up here, but all He did was merely vindicating the position of the first Adam from the evil; the position of which had been most fully shewn in the Jew, as specifically put under the Law: whence Christ was the Son of Man, born of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem, etc.

Now, the full extent of this was shewn in the resurrection of Lazarus, which completed therefore the witness to that. It was the glorifying the Father's name in Adam by the Son of God. In all His life, and fully in this, the Father's name was glorified; for Lazarus was raised or brought forth into natural life again; the power of death merely set aside; God glorified as the Father, to wit, of man also by the Son,

in respect of this first supremacy of natural life, vindicated by Him over evil. But (for this was in the moment of transition after, as we have seen, His recognition in all His various characters being rejected) He was to glorify it again, declared or determined to be "the Son of God with power" (not so Adam) "according to the Spirit of holiness," as contrasted with the flesh altogether, "by the resurrection from the dead."

But, as the principle of natural life (not of course in death, which we are naturally,) was exhibited in the first Adam, and we failed in sin, and then the Law broken (all was indeed in death before God, as such; and the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, vindicated it as Man on God's part from the power of Satan, having overcome him,) so in the resurrection life (in both individuals were preserved, and so in the Law, by God's grace and power,) given to us as connected with Jesus, that is, the Church. We have wholly failed, and the Lord must come and vindicate in Person the fulness of resurrection power, and be really and justly the Second Adam; fulfil this also, and glorify the Father in this character, in which we have failed also.

This most interesting subject we cannot pursue further here, as it would become a treatise rather; but we could not follow this passage without noticing it.

Note the completeness of the 31st and 32nd verses of John xii. The world is judged by the death of Christ; Satan (shewn to be its prince) is cast out. But then,

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." How the universal and absolute condemnation of the world (the overthrow, withal, of Satan) and grace in the attractive object, and in itself efficacious work, *towards* all, is shewn at the same time in the cross!

Chapter XIII.

After this our Lord enters on a new character quite; what He was, being faithful unto death (*v.* 1) as He had been in witness (chap. xii. 49, 50), after His ascension; that is, as out of the earth for His people, who did own Him as in it. He was come "that I might save the world." We shall see this in what follows. His death was the medial point. It ended the world, as it were, in judgment in death, but it opened as the propitiation to it the way to the Father, a door for it, door of reconciliation. There was no worse sin against the world, for it was summed up in Him, all. There was all sin upon it, as in His death, so that it could come only in a new and living way of sovereign mercy by His resurrection. It was in the love to His own which were in it that He went through its rejection, so to speak, unconcerned.

The former was an act done for them, in which they had no part as regarded Christ; in the latter they were on Christ's heart, so in the act as that He loved them and gave Himself for them. But this merely by the by.

It appears also that the temptations of our Lord; that is, His exposure to the trial and power of Satan, followed the two great branches of His life in which the Father's glory was thus manifested. The first, after which the devil departed from Him for a season, applied itself to cause to fail the righteous life of the living Man, in which He was conversant as Son of God in obedience and acknowledgement of the supremacy of God: "Thou shalt worship Jehovah thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." He was a Jew recognizing Jehovah righteously, the Son of God.

We may remark that in the first two temptations (I call them the first two, following the order of their occurrence as facts in Matthew,) the proposal to the Lord is as Son of God: "If thou be, command, or cast." But the Lord acts simply in obedience, the place of the living Man, not raising His Sonship or His power (which would have shewn a wrong spirit,) but taking the holy line of obedience which, worthy [of], yea exalting the Son, was the clear and only righteous path of the Man in which He then stood, and thus baffled Satan. Having therefore overcome him thus in the character of the obedient Man, the Son of God, and vindicated this character and place exactly where Adam had failed, and dishonoured God, as He now honoured Him, the Lord then exercised His power as Son of God in this character, exhibited in the course of His life and walk through

the world. The devil, the tempter or accuser, departed from Him for a season. He exercised His power over Satan or the adversary, recognized as what he was, and subdued.

In our Lord's subsequent temptation we see Him in a deeper and fuller trial; one in which He not only overcame Satan as one who sought to lead the living Man out of obedience in the world, and make himself the god of it, but in which He through death (to which obedience was needful, if he should be overcome, because he had got the title of death by the truth of God's word as the necessary result of evil, to which for His disciples' sake He had subjected Himself,) in which through death He overcame him that had the power of death. He spoiled principalities and powers. He exhibited resurrection power by being or being subject to death. This then was not victory in resistance, personal (that had been perfectly in the former conflict, and through all His life; the prince of this world could find nothing in Him), but subjection (and note therefore necessarily substitutory, or done for others, obedience to their necessity), in which, while He overcame death, Satan, and put away sin, as standing as the one Man with God, He did it withal with purpose of grace, to wit, His Church, for He "loved the Church, and gave Himself for it."

The act was perfect, so that there was now no abstract barrier, and all are doubly without excuse. The act was effectual; for He had no need of it for Himself, and He gave Himself effectually for the Church: and in that sense He was the sinner; His sins and iniquities

went over His head, a sore burden, and too many for Him to bear; and the Great Shepherd of the sheep offering Himself without spot to God was brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting Covenant; for He was identified with the sins of His people.

But the act of our Lord, looked at in His personal act and trial, was meeting Satan for the vindication of this new character, otherwise alone, "abiding alone," for all were dead and under the power and liability to death; and meeting Satan in the power of death, Satan being overcome herein, He rose in the power, and His Father was glorified in the Son; that is, in the name of the Father in resurrection life. It is this name which is declared to the brethren therefore in the 22nd Psalm, which hangs on this truth in all its bearings. Into this point the Apostle of the Lord now conducts us: Christ after resurrection through death. His testimony had closed.

"Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world," where He had glorified the Father, "to the Father," the point in which He stood was this: "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." That end was death, or closed in death; for it is the utterness of His love in its exercise, its trial, He here speaks of, not its continuity as God; though both go together. His going to the Father was come, for He was rejected. Man had proved reprobate, knew Him not, its Lord and God, or rejected Him. Was He to go simply away? He

might; and boundless love had been shewn, and God justified, but not satisfied. There were an "own" in the world whom He had found. (He bought the world for the sake of the Church, selling all that He had to buy that field with the treasure hidden in it). He had found them, and loved them, and proved now how truly.

His time to go was come; but He loved His own to the end. He went by the obedience to death, or the Corn of good wheat must have remained alone. Twelve legions of Angels He might have had; but not so His purpose. Accordingly, when His time to go was come, He saying, indeed said, "I love My Master," for He had become obedient to God His Father; "I love My wife," the bride; "I love My children"; and His ear, the symbol of obedience, was nailed to the door-post. Yea, He free, oh, wondrous word! the ELOHIM, and He became a Servant for ever. Oh, wondrous word of love to His Church, marvel of grace unto the end! Thus Christ, passing into glory, became a Servant to the Church for ever; in death thus, for the sake of His Master, nailing His very ear to the post; on high the Washer of their feet, as we shall see; coming forth in glory the girded Servant of His people (Luke xii. 37). For the Father loved the children, and He was become the Servant of the Father (for their sakes also, for He loved them). Instead therefore of going out free, "He loved them unto the end."

This is the great principle shewn in His death. Then it is led out into the service which He executed for them risen. This then was the Church ministration of grace:

He washed; we should wash one another's [feet]. Here then comes in a most important point. Judas was there. The heart, sin, was there; and the Lord knew them that were His (*v.* 13). But the Church is not cognizant in this ministration of grace of unmanifested sin: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," the Church's seal. Accordingly the Lord so acted, for He was now exercising the ministration of Church grace. But there was that which drew out into action, delivering (by the ministration even of grace) up to Satan; and Judas was separated from amongst them in the rest: "Then entered" (*v.* 27).

This is a most exceedingly important and plain instruction. We have the great fact: He loved His own unto the end; then there is divinely revealed to us the fact that, the ministration of supper going on, the occasion of discipline and the time for the external ministration of grace, this feet-washing, taking place. The devil had cast (the seed) into the heart of Judas Iscariot that he should betray Him. The Church has no cognizance of this; for Christ (though the Divine Spirit reveals the fact), did not act in cognizance of this, for He acted in order. And so, though we may see it, we have to act; for we could not act else upon conscience of ourselves before God, or of others, but from Divine knowledge; that is, in principle, which is not the thing manifested in the Church, but its character, and shew we, we cannot act (as we see in our Lord's temptation, subjecting Himself to it for our sakes) till we can say "Satan"; previously merely on obedience, or as on grace, till it be manifested by the act of the person, provided

there be a calling, and Scripture to act upon. How humbling, how (if He had not been perfect, as He was) trying to the Lord to wash Judas's feet, knowing what was coming about! Not however in its development, till expecting in His spirit, His conviction, He acting on the Divine mind, did the act (not in enmity, but in grace,) which brought the revelation of purpose in him that was led of Satan.

While it merely remained the devil, and he had put it into the heart, as he had without tempted our Lord, our Lord dealt with Judas (the disciple) as with the rest externally. In His sufferings he was not with Him. This is most instructive. "When I would have healed Ephraim, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered."

I know not whether I have hitherto noticed the (I believe) uniform distinction between the undiscovered accuser or tempter *diabolos*, devil, and the known adversary, Satan. The last we can act on openly in denouncement, the former avoid or detect by obedience, and resist. See how, Rev. xii. 11; and see the temptation. If we know Satan in conversation we are always entitled, that is, can say, Get thee hence; otherwise overcome him unknown, as the Lord, by obedience as a Servant; so we, as here noted. And we find this agency of the tempter of the Church and enemy opened out here in the exercise towards any disciple also as met by the great High Priest, who acts in His office, the result of which is always to discern the offender. We must still act in the way of obedience, for it is in the way of love. The intercession draws in God, the Lord's Spirit, into the midst, or to act in behalf of His Church,

and the result is the putting out of the offender. For the drawing God into the closeness of the association, by the Church's intercession and acting in grace, necessarily brings, so to speak, God into the discovery of that which is inconsistent, with which He cannot bear, in this association, and He is forced to act in discipline and towards His Church in this behalf, by throwing that which is hidden into such positive agency as enables the Church to remove it, giving the ground of obedience, or in the exercise of power delivering the offender by the power of Satan into the position which is manifest, Satan, an adversary; we have *obedience* and spirituality, or rather spirituality and obedience.

Now, this was the case here. Obedience, if it is simple, is omnipotence in the sense that it puts into the place in which God is acting. God is acting in it, though we may know nothing, and thus it is unseen. Satan is overcome. For indeed "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies." But while this is fully developed here, which we have by no means followed out in commenting on it, let us turn to its effectual ministration in the Church: "He loved His own which were in the world."

The just source and order of dealing with unseen evil being noticed, we pass on in the Word to the blessing, to the Lord's ministrations, blessed, servant-like, whose glory was to be humbled ministrations. The structure of the sentence is as follows: "Jesus knowing that," that His hour was

come to go to the Father, would not (as we have seen) go out free, but "having loved His own which [were] in the world, loved them to the end . . . Jesus knowing that the Father had given Him all things . . . rises from supper," etc., left the personal association with them (not eating again till, etc.) and began His service of washing. That applied in power to "His own"; this exercised towards the undiscovered sinner (or instrument of Satan).

I am deeply persuaded that all hence ought in Church order to be treated as a moral fault (see elsewhere). In the former of these then they (Judas) had no part, though that of course was nothing apparent; in the latter he had ostensibly, because ostensibly a disciple. But this supposes the Church to hold the ground of calling; otherwise any question of God's choosing cannot come in. And this implies faith, order, and discipline, and the presence of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost.

Note further (which is our trial), the Church always acts here as under the presence of the traitor; or the agency, efficiency, of the intercessor would be to that extent immaterial. But Christ in this ministers this His intercession; and we have now to see what the efficiency and operation of this intercession is; one, that is, the love, was knowing as to His departure; this was knowing that all things were given into His hands of the Father, and that He came from God, and went to God.

These are the two great points of His ministerial glory. One was the conferred glory in office; the other

was the character and glory in respect of that with which He was identified, speaking here only of mission. The *Father* had given all things into His hand. As the Son, He was the Depositary of all power and glory in manifestation and title. Into Jesus's hands the Father had put it all. Again, He came from God. This is not merely the conferrence of authority, of all things into His hand, being the Son, but the manifestation in moral exhibition of *God*. He came from Him; not from man; not from anything else; but had simply come forth from God, abstractedly; and might therefore be a Witness to all things else, a Witness of God, as come from Him. An Apostle, whatsoever his eminence, is by Jesus Christ. He is by nothing but from God, straight from Him, immediately witnessing in Himself. So, also, He went to God, the adequate Representative of the necessities of man, and capable, in the same unscathed holiness, of standing before Him as when He came forth from His presence (and who is He but God?), the marvel of the universe.

This great truth, then, that He came forth from God, and went to God, with the conference of all power on Him by the Father, as officially exhibiting and representing Him, form the great ground on which we meet Him as Mediator; that in which, being a Man, He stands in this wonderful position.

Let us take the statement simply as it stands. It was His mediatorial glory thus brought out, comprehensively stating the power of it. This glory was His. Then, not sitting down to the festival of peace, He with all this glory before Him, as Possessor of all

this glory, makes Himself a Servant. There is necessity for His saints. He does not now feast at rest with them, as the Head of His guests, but rises, assumes another office, laying aside His garments, His garments of ease, as a Servant, and girds Himself with the cleansing office which they still needed in the world. The robe or garment of conviviality is laid aside, and He takes a towel, and girds Himself. Who else should have done it but He? This (though He knew that all things were delivered into His hand, and that, etc.) He did—it is universal power, and personal independence of the necessity—He did, because His saints needed it; because He loved them; because He had identified Himself with them; for the grace into which they were to be brought before and in the presence of the Father. Instead of taking this glory in manifestation and independency, He, knowing it His, assumes the office of washing the disciples' feet: "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word."

This, while it was the lowest service, was the most truly exalted in love, His glory as a Man; yea, His glory as God humbling Himself to behold. I believe there is something fully depicted by the Lord's doing it, as to manner, as follows; not only to behold, but having come into the midst of, to minister to in Person. When the High Priest went into the most holy place, he washed the flesh, and put on the holy garments. So even of Aaron and his sons (Exodus xxx.; Lev. xvi., etc.). Jesus girded Himself, knowing all that was His, and washed His disciples' [feet]. When the woman washed our Lord's feet it was as unworthy to do aught else.

The Lord in condescension takes the same office. She in humiliation, with her own tears. He with the competency of His own instrumentality. She wipes it with all she had, the hair of her head; a woman's portion, whatever her shame was; He as girt for service, which He had taken in the competency of His love. But we have to remark the identity of the instrument with which He was girt and that with which He wiped the disciples' feet. In the first place our Lord's girding to service was the ministry of love towards His people. That which kept Him still girt was the necessity of service. The anxiety, the ministration of service, the necessity of His people was that [which] girt His mind, set the Lord not at ease with His garments loose. His girdle was thorough identity with the position of His people. But more; I believe the rising from supper was the relinquishment of the position in which He was with His disciples. He was calling, or had them in to the supper, as it were. He was there, and He had called them in. *Deipnou genomenou* clearly, I think, means while it [the supper] was going on. Instead of going on with it He lays aside His garments, and *girds* Himself with the towel of cleansing to His people. That is, Jesus, while calling in to the supper, gives up His place at it, that He may minister to the necessities of those introduced, though all power was therein His, and all perfectness; but in seeing this in Him we see the portion of His people; that is, that they should be fitted and associated with Him in this power, and stand in the perfectness in which He came from and went to God, even the righteousness of God; but He, being in this, is

girded to minister to them ; also their character as sons : "that the *Father* had given all things into His hand." But the continued position of service in this, in identity girt with that service in the spirit of His mind, is that which we see here. In judgment His garment is down to His feet, because He exercises it in Divine power. It is not service ; though there is the perfectness of judgment in Rev. i. 13, a golden girdle instead of a breastplate. This then is the revelation we have of Christ in office, from His leaving the companionship of the disciples a little moment till His return.

Next, I remark there is no re-sprinkling of the blood. It cannot be done. There is no remedy if that be denied. But Christ ministers the Spirit in His Priesthood ; and what we have to notice here is that, as in Numbers xix., the ashes of the heifer were to sprinkle. Even there [it] was the witness of the previous finishedness of the work, which the Spirit bears witness of to the mind. So it is the Spirit which applies the work of Christ in the first instance to faith. Jesus "hath washed us from our sins in His own blood." Bathed (*leloumenos*), we have not need to be so again. But there is the exercise of daily cleansing to the feet, cleansing from the effects of our conversation in this world. There we touch the earth, and this is necessary. If Jesus do not take away all defilement, it would not do. Those only whom He thus washes have part with Him. He cannot have feet even left soiled. But He does so for His people. We must bow to this office of Jesus. If He does not wash *us*, we have no part with Him. We have the sure evidence that it was a mystical action in verse 7.

In the priests of old, they washed their hands and their feet; here feet only. It was not a system of doings, but conversation in the world. Walk still had to be taken cognizance of in grace. The emphasis is on "thou" in verses 6 and 7, and "I" also in verse 7: this the effectual ministration according to all the perfectness in which He came forth from and went to *God*; and in the love and for the power in which all things were given into His hand by the Father. He was a Servant withal in this perfectness in grace to secure them to be in it (compare xvii. 24, 25), the daily ministrations of Christ (unless condemnation to those who are not washed in His blood).

Blessed truths from the lips of Him who was Truth, who spoke the words *of God*! Yet was He with us to wash our feet, to be the glorious, yet lowly, Servant of our necessities. The Lord resumed His seat. We notice, in passing, His assumption of His garments and rest.

Note, Aaron never wore, that I can see, his garments for beauty and glory but on the day of his consecration; nor was the rule of the most holy place and the day of Atonement made till after, and upon the death of Nadab and Abihu. Then it is said (Lev. xvi.): "Speak to Aaron," etc.; and the manner is told, and Aaron went in with holy garments, and girt; for it is *this* part of the office he is the type of. And accordingly (though after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life,) the whole typical instruction of the *exercise* of Christ's Priesthood now is from Aaron and his service. And all this is the day of Atonement, while

Aaron is within the veil. By faith we know Jesus crowned with glory and beauty; the same words which are used of Aaron's robes; and that He is set down there; that is, on the Father's throne. But withal He is still in the exercise of this office as Man in His clean white robes, holy garments. But here, note, it is the exercise of ministry towards the people in presence of the Father. He has the perfectness of the blood presenting within the veil. Here He ministers the witness and service of this perfectness to them.

This is the greatest humiliation of Jesus, to be occupied about sin; that is, the defilement of His people. But He does so. It is humiliation of heart, internal exercise. He must rise, and lay aside His garments. He has them all in glory; but here, as it were, He must be girt. He must wash their feet, though Teacher and Lord. We ought to do so. The need of the Church, the witness of its perfectness, our personal grace, and sympathy with, having unity of mind and heart with Jesus, is to be able to wait upon the sins of our brethren. How little we do it!

It is sad to think it is hard to wash one another's feet, defiled feet. If we loved our brethren as Jesus loved them we should. Little is it for us, but it is glory. The glory of love, too, enables us to be humbled, humble ourselves to be nothing; and in measure as we ascend to Jesus's spirit, and partake of it, we shall be able to minister. One that is high alone can make Himself low, because He is high. The height of love is to do the lowest service, to go to the uttermost depth. It is here is union with Jesus. Its reward, its glory, is

not without. It is the spirit of intrinsic perfectness. In measure as we have His Spirit, as Man anointed, we (as in Him, and He in us,) will do it. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them.

It is the only real service. It is what Christ wants and does about His sheep; loved if they do fail. Great glory is it, the very heart of union with Jesus, if we are permitted, enabled to do it, if Christ does it in us. But this can only be in real union with Him. Services may apply to others. This is Christ's work, and can properly be only in them in whom His Spirit dwells, by that Spirit. This is the very portion, the glory of the Church; but, oh! what shall we say of our state, this washing of one another's feet? Again, again I say, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Happy! It is the way of happiness. But the nearest to Christ in the form of the Church may be utterly far from this: "He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me."

This is the unintelligible thing: all sin in those whom Christ *seems* to have chosen seems to falsify the whole foundation, or witness of the foundation, of one's hopes. But the revelation of it by Christ beforehand only witnesses the rather that it is He, the Christ, the blessed One, the Son of God. We have the use of *ap' arti*, "from this present time," as heretofore. He had not told them before, or they *could* not have got on. They could not righteously have got on with Judas. It would not have been possible. But now the scene of this was closed. The Lord was about to go. Judas was about to be separated from them. He may tell them, with no want

of charity in example; yea, in necessity for their sakes in righteousness and truth. How nicely timed the Lord's "From this present time"! He could not on any account have told it before, "before it comes to pass," or it would have seemed to their faith some imbecility, some fallibility in Him. But now the rather it shewed His love, His patience, His glory, and every grace in Him most perfectly; more so as regarded ministry and trial than almost anything else of human things around Him.

Then is brought out a most important principle; and how simply *perfect* are the Lord's principles! Exercise of this feet-washing towards others Judas was incapable of. No interchange of spiritual service could he exercise or fulfil his part of. Had they then erred who had received him sent of Jesus? No! He had sent him for wise purposes, in the wisdom of God; chosen to send him. They that had received even him had received him, or those who had done so, as sent of Christ, and it was Christ really in purpose and honour they had received. As far as he was the messenger of Him they therefore were honoured in their act, whatever Judas was, if the Lord Christ chose to send him. This is a most blessed principle. Many a one may have erred in receiving people as sent of Christ who honoured Christ therein. I speak now as to the principle of their hearts, for I speak only as to the gracious consideration of the Lord. The statement of the Lord is, "He who receiveth whomsoever I send"; and here is the principle, "whomsoever I send"; no matter who, Christ is received. Judas *was sent*; Christ (how blessed to him

who received Judas!) was received: "whomsoever I shall send." If Christ has sent any, howsoever poor or without other sanction, if sent of the Lord this is all we have to look to, we receive Christ. The point we have to look to is the sending of Christ; this being, if a person is not received, Christ is not received. The Lord's choice was not because Judas was this, but Judas was the appointed one for it; and that the Scripture might be fulfilled so it was done.

The acts of Christ, though the perfect wisdom of God, were not the arbitrary acts of a moment, but the ordained counsel of God; so that as a Man He could obey them, while His wisdom in them was Divine. That "whomsoever I shall send," specially in the present confusion of the Church, is of vast moral importance, the key-stone of holy grace and destroyer of confusion in the Church. We receive the Sender in receiving the messenger. Let us keep this ever in mind. It is a "Verily, verily," of Christ's; and thereby we receive God even the Father, the Sender. See the simple glory of this verse, its dignity! But this, while it made perfect value to those who had received even Judas for His sake *when He sent him*, turned the Lord's mind immediately to him. The principle is simple, and to be taken in its utmost simplicity, for this is its force. But its occasion arose out of Judas; for our evil is constantly that which brings out the testimony and value of Divine principles; indeed, ordinarily so. The principle turns on every side, subduing everything that does not submit itself to Christ, in whatever shape it comes.

But it involves here an awful result. The Church never fails from enmity from without. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," as men have spoken. It is betrayed from within, by those who have the form of service, those who dip their hand with Him in the dish. We are prepared for it. The Lord has warned us beforehand. But it is a solemn and awful truth, a truth which troubles *Jesus* in spirit; the consciousness ("these things saying") that it was one whom He sent, though sent in Divine wisdom, who should betray Him.

It were well if all these sentences marked "Verily, verily" were collected. They are the expressions of the great principles which our Lord divulged. This was one of the great principles on which the Church hung: "One of *you* shall betray Me." It was not only, I know who shall, I know Judas. This was not the point. One of *you*, *you* that are thus associated with Me; this was what troubled His spirit. Is Jesus, our blessed wronged (by us) Master, less grieved and troubled at evil and apostasy in the Church?

We see in this how Jesus felt things according to their character; as a Man, yet as God. (O God, to what days hast Thou brought us? Our comfort is that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, that there is resurrection if there is death; and His plans are not frustrated, though our evil be developed. And they are good days, exceeding good days, for the better glory of the Lord draweth nigh. He shall be glorified in all things). But this is a great principle in the Church: "one of you." It fails from what it is associated with;

never from what opposes it. Its glory would only be the more shewn by this, and therefore when Jesus takes it into His own hands (and His strength is ours,) it is so; and, as we have said, He is glorified at all events.

It was this that we find so pressing on the mind of our Lord, as in Psalms cix., xli.; and the principle of it is shewn in Ps. lv. Though I do not think that it applies to Judas, but to the apostate Jews, and that including their connection with Antichrist. But it has its vent in Judas in its first lines of character. See notes on Psalm cix. But the "these things saying" is of great force here, shewing the connection when it had its rise in our Lord's mind. Oh! what a picture is this of the depths of the Divine counsels, that the necessary principles of abstract righteousness, being wrought out in man, necessarily flow out into apostasy and the grief of Jesus, until Jesus Himself takes the power it is wrapped up in, the ordering of the perfectness of Jesus; for without this His glory (man being a sinner) would not have been brought out, not His patient glory, as here (for this was the deepest trial of all; an open enemy He could have borne); nor we have to humble ourselves and say (not His glorious, that is, manifested glory,) we also, not as Judas, yet still betray His glory; yea, have turned our glory into a calf. The Church must fail, yea, the Lord knew it had in it from the beginning that which should make it fail. But the order nevertheless of our glory was therein, for if it had not, the glory could not have come in, any more than the death; speaking as ordered without Judas. Yet is it our evil. Jesus' spirit is troubled in it. But we remark that the consciousness of liability is

the evidence of safety, the consciousness of no such intention (they looked one at the other), of none such in themselves or others. The sin of Judas was to the disciples an unknown sin, or they would have been partakers in it, if not acting on it; doubting, at a loss, concerning whom He spoke. Thus we find in their fellowship there was no known evil, or there would have been implication of guilt, even in the betrayal of the Lord Himself.

There are some in Jesus's bosom who have (learn), and from whom the most energetic have to learn, the secrets of the Lord. Oh! for the day when the Johns and the Peters shall be thus knit together in the common anxiety and interest for the Lord. For love has different characters, but the same object, and works together to the same result. Very different characters gives energy morally to all; to some in act, to some in holy zeal of patience. Peter founded in ministry; John watched over the declining Church; one in active love, the other in jealous love for the Lord. Both wrought in the same daily service. Protracted service will separate those who, in the impulse of the Spirit of Christ, have served with knit hearts while the work was one. There is but one place where we all meet (not of work, for Jesus did all the work), in which we are one, but rest in the fruits of that which He has given us portion.

Peter would know; he was eager to know. It is leaning on Jesus's breast alone we know these things. There we learn all things. He is not wont to keep back (for surely He dealeth as a friend) anything. From one thus leaning on His bosom He has no secrets, but He

deals with us as friends. (Lord Jesus, give us grace to know Thy mind, know it because by affection and habit we are upon Thy bosom, as servants to do Thy will, so that Thou shouldest have reason to trust us with Thy secrets. May we know Thy mind; then shall we do it in blessed confidence for Thy Church, as friends with Thee.) And what brought John there, habits of affection for Jesus, lead us into such a place, not knowing what we shall receive there, but finding love (it was "the disciple whom Jesus loved"), and love finding its place, and in that place all the rest; but it was the habitual title of affection through grace placed John there. As he was before "reclining," so now "leaning" on Jesus' breast, pressed in his mind that he might extract the secret thence. (Lord, unworthy as we are, teach us, give us thus to be "leaning" upon Thy breast, thus to derive its secrets from it, now left hidden there, that we know not; even so, Lord, in love.)

It shewed the uttermost evil, and how base a heart can be [of one] who has even seen Jesus outwardly, and the utter power of Satan over [a] heart not touched by grace with His love; that, to go just to betray that hand which had then given him the sop,—but what will not the human heart do untouched by grace? "Am I a dog, that I should do this thing?"—a man will do also in power what he would not have thought of in weakness; for whatever lets loose the heart lets loose its evil, and the uttermost kindness does but draw it out where the evil is; that is, this form of evil, when Satan is working.

The greatest manifestation of kindness on the part of

the Lord does but bring out enmity against Him. For whatever the outwardly amiable form of nature may be with which the heart may be clothed, the root, the moral root, of the heart thus fallen is enmity against God, and Satan works it to its point; and whatever manifests, brings the sense of, God near the heart, or would be the instrument of revealing Him in Jesus (Jesus, Himself the great instrument of God's revelation, He in whom He is revealed, or is God revealed,) does but, in the instrument of the working of Satan, draw out of course its enmity against and according to (that is, in proportion to, so sad is evil,) the revelation.

So here: after the sop Satan entered into Judas. The devil had already put it into his heart, and he had agreed with the chief priests. Now he proceeds to the deadly act. We have already noticed the distinction between his putting it into his heart and his entering in the energy of active power, overcoming scruples or difficulties, and the corruption of the heart in desire, and the like answerable work of the Spirit of God in us. But we cannot too diligently study the whole position of the Church here marked out in the presence of the adversary, the betrayer; the Spirit of God and the spirit of evil, as shewn too within itself; the office and operation of Christ in meek patience concerning it, which, sorrowful as it is, is the part of the Church; the spirit of intercession and loving care; the hatred of evil; the thorough washing; the spirit of communion; the spirit of service; its learning the sorrows of the Lord's mind, and the manner of them; a sorrowful learning (for it is evil) by intimacy of communion,

habitual grace of affection which finds its place near Him, "leaning on the breast of Jesus."

The Lord's holy and perfect (wise) grace, through all by which, in perfect patience in Him, evil assumes its proper place, so that (oh, that we might have this, have enough of the Spirit to act upon it!), so as that the saints have no difficulty; not acting on the spirit of evil (that borne in the patience of hope, in the practical exercise of charity), but the manifestation of evil fully brought out by it, though it ought to have done the opposite, till in opposition to the Lord it found its own place; and none could shew one spot of want of charity which hastened its steps, but the contrary, or had distracted the minds of the saints with that which was not of God.

The holy spirit of fear, as all *naturally* liable to the same thing, which actuated the disciples, wondering of whom He spake, sure withal that He spake true, in conscious weakness; the whole position from beginning to end, till Satan carries into execution his own purpose, is a most blessed and wonderful picture of the Church in its trial.

But this 27th verse is a very awful word. Then comes the accomplishment of wickedness; therefore he was now given up to wickedness, and could be viewed in no other light by the disciples knowing it. But they knew it not as yet. They had no business with it, but with themselves. The Lord may carefully dip a sop in love, the act of love. It turns to gall in the heart of the unbeliever. Satan enters after it, and what then is the sop but the bitter aggravation of iniquity and evil? But

what a dreadful thought, "Satan entered into him"! Oh, how should we dread, not in distrust of the Lord, but ourselves, the deceivings of Satan! for as the Lord can have His saints by His power where Satan's seat is, so Satan can enter where the Lord is sitting at table; after (with) the sop He gives; where the heart is ripe to receive him; and, we must remember, in the sure and infallible care of the sheep, as we have even here; for none fell but Judas, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Our natural man is (in itself) as liable to his deceits as the natural heart of the unbeliever; for it is the same. Thus pride is checked, and the believer's sin may be the opener too, if not humble, and conscious of his own weakness; as Peter thrice openly denied the Lord, adding after cursing and swearing about it, though preserved from the effects of it by pure grace. And in itself in mere justice surely it was as good cause for his being cast off as possible. But his faith failed not, for there was One that prayed for him; and the same grace restored him.

But here Satan had entered in, and the word was only, "What thou doest, do quickly." What a difference! And the character of the act answered to the agent. It was not perfectly evil, as that was (in itself), the failure of the natural evil man under the sifting of Satan, but the active agency of the leading of Satan against Him in His weakness; not the denial that he knew Him, but the betrayal of Him whom he knew, the alliance with the enemies, the acting under the influence of evil immediately against the Son of God as

Man, in the point, yet blind led, in which the heart of a believer would most have gone with Him.

How little did the disciples enter into the sufferings, the sorrow, of the Lord, of the Son of Man. No man knew, even of those at the table with Him, what it was of which He spake. There are certain sorrows kept for the secret of the Lord's heart, whose secret is perhaps their sorrow. If He had had any to sympathize with Him, His betrayal would have been in this sense easy. There would have been some faithful hearts, a veil over the apostasy of the other. But He was alone in it. None understood what it was. They thought it was to buy something, or give to the poor; but there was something more than ignorance in this wrong estimate, from the heart being occupied with other things than that which the Lord's heart necessarily was. The Lord had just said, "One of you," etc., and told John that it was he to whom He gave the sop; and He gave it to Judas. Now, if their hearts had been engaged with this they would have immediately associated the word, "What thou doest, do quickly," with it.

The thoughts and judgment of men concerning all things flow chiefly from their previous associations and habit of feeling and mind. None but God can call them out of them in presenting Jesus. Wrong judgment flows always from wrong affections, or the imperfection arising out of it. God's judgment is that which He acts. The Lord also judged and felt from previous associations, so to speak, and they were all heavenly, though now human.

When he went out, which he did, receiving the sop,

the Lord said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified," etc.; that in which the whole mystery of the *purpose* of God in Christ is developed, both in suffering and in glory, to wit, in these two verses: "Now"; for Jesus had now fully submitted Himself to the suffering, to the trial.

The point of submission was betrayal by His own disciples, one of them. (We in principle betray the Lord [by] every sin we commit.) And this sorrow bowed to, He had taken the cup into His hand. Mentally, as it were, the thing was passed. It was to be carried into execution, but Jesus had taken the step. He had submitted to the sorrow, redeeming sorrow, trusting His Father, to go through all. This was the trial of the Son of Man. In this He was glorified, and God in Him. He acquiesced, made up His mind to go through it. He might have gone free; but how should His Father, how should God, be glorified, the Scripture fulfilled that thus it must be? Here was the hingeing point: the desertion of those most trusted, and His Father alone trusted in, even through the trial, that trial in which was all trial, of our sin, even in the sight of God. Hence our Lord says, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night," "and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me" (Matt. xxvi. 31; John xvi. 32).

It is evident that, when our Lord had given His mind to the subject, He speaks of the thing as done. When Judas had therefore gone out, and the stream of Satan's power was now let flow in the betrayal of one of His disciples, the Lord says, "Now has [or is] the Son of Man been glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

We learn from this that it is not the outward sufferings, though most true and significant (as apparent) to man of the others, but the moral submission to God which constituted the hinge of our Lord's standing in this work. It was not merely (moreover) that He bore the sins of the Church (as indeed He did), but there was a great abstract fact of the vindication of Divine glory, independent of all consequences, and *more important than all*, and which presents itself first to the Saviour's mind, centring in His Person; yea, as it were circumscribed by it; but withal in the person of Man; so that, in the infinite riches and unspeakable manifestation of grace, as in man God had been permanently dishonoured, in Man (even in Jesus) He was to be glorified. And so was it needful for the perfect rescue of His glory without stint. And Jesus spoke here in this character: "Now is the Son of Man glorified," as only He could be in His Person.

Adam, man, the first Adam, as son of God, had utterly fallen and dishonoured God as far as any creature could, as we shall see. He who was Son of God as *Son of Man*, the assumer of the responsibilities of that race in Person, completely revindicated it to God as the representative of it; baffling Satan wholly, and overcoming him. Man as the son of God had been degraded, not merely by losing God as an effect of sin, but in losing Him his moral beauty was all spoiled. He had been degraded in disobedience by folly in not trusting God, and therefore deceived by Satan, and his weakness or ignorance shewn, his impotency and foolishness; easy of deception, and unable to resist its effects, losing the

blessings of God, who had crowned him with blessings, for the lie of Satan as to the apple. He had distrusted God, and believed Satan. He had been basely ungrateful to God, and given Satan credit for goodness, God for malevolence in keeping back the best thing from him. He had set up to assail herein the Majesty of God, and to be "as gods." There was distrust of God in all His goodness, belief in Satan in spite of God's word, and the height of presumption in seeking to be "as elohim"; and all this in the exhibition of his utter weakness and impotency, bringing judgment on himself in guilt (though this applies more fully afterwards); hiding himself from God, and then excusing himself by throwing the blame anywhere, but not in holy confession of sin. But how was God's power impaired in this His most favoured creature, companion creature, made in His own likeness, and everything put under his hand!

There are three things we have of God through knowledge of Him in Jesus, in whom alone we know Him: grace, truth, and all incommunicable Majesty. All was blighted, as far as a creature could blight it, in the first Adam. The son of God in his innocence, he denied the grace, though possessing many blessings, and took Satan as a better friend than God: God having grasped through envy the last and only worthy thing, He was not to be trusted; and this in the midst of blessings. He denied the truth of God, and directly believed Satan saying, "Ye shall not surely die," and assumed to be "as elohim," to be gods, taking His incommunicable Majesty as a shared thing. God was utterly denied, and the fairest of God's creatures became

the only permanent exhibition, or scene of exhibition, of dishonour done to God, of His weakness (of course, I speak only apparent), failure, baffling by His enemy, and spoiling of His works in the sight of all the universe. This was what man was witness of.

I have often spoken of this. I take merely the heads of it now. The principle will sufficiently shew itself. The Son of Man, therefore, was perfectly glorified, as acting in temptation but yielding to none of it, and that with everything adverse, even to "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" as Adam, the son of God, had failed with everything of present blessing to sustain him outwardly, and remind him. As in Phil. ii., instead of assuming to be "as elohim" when as mere man, when as Elohim He thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, and become as a Man, shewed blessed self-humiliation, instead of Adam's effort to raise himself, and went down to sorrow instead of attempting to be "as Elohim."

The Lord shewed perfect trust in the goodness of God when (though He had to say, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," and crying "in the day time, and Thou hearest not; and in the night season I take no rest,") He says, "Thou continuest holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." And the truth of God was perfectly vindicated in that, in very deed, He died for sin, the witness that death was in very, very deed the wages of sin; for He became obedient to it. Thus was the Son of Man glorified; now more so than in fulfilling every position, bearing the vindication of God under the burden of all in which man had (humanly) destroyed the possibility of it,

in which man had accumulated centuries of dishonour, all offences; and death the portion of faithfulness. He did all which could honour living man in requisition from God, and God in doing it; so that Man vindicated the character of God. Nothing could be more perfect or blessed than this great sight, this one fact for which the world was created, this blessed truth, this single truth: God was glorified where He had been dishonoured, God was gloriously glorified. Could the Son of Man have any other such glory, all the moral glory here shewn out, the vindication of what God was? Then if God be glorified in Him, the Son of Man, God shall also glorify Him in Himself. This is the full glory of the Son of Man. When He shall come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and of all the holy Angels, the glory of God will appear in the Son of Man, in the face of Jesus Christ. While this is true as to the manifestation of His glory, when He shall be shewn in His times (*idios kairois*), yet straightway He was to be glorified. He had finished the work. God was perfectly glorified in Him; and therefore, though He waited for the Church to be glorified with Him, to be manifested (because that blessed One was to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe), yet He ascended up into glory, sitting down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having by Himself purged our sins. "I see," says Stephen, "the glory of God, and the Son of Man" (for thus it is He is then), "standing at the right hand of God." Thus the Son of Man was (expecting till His enemies were made His footstool) straightway

glorified, glory of God, the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

This connection of the glory of the Son of Man, and God in Him, and He in God (and that straightway for the Church) is the most important that can be in the moral exhibition which all these wondrous dealings of God can present.

The Lord then goes on to apply the consequences of this to them. But what a contrast! what a sentence! "When he was gone out"!—when the blackest deed that Satan ever had done was now accomplished; that is, morally now, says the unburthened mind of the Lord, unburthened in passing through the crisis, and shewing what it was, and dwelt on, and the apprehension of the Divine glory in it all,—"*Now* is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you." There was immediately involved in this the leaving of His disciples, *the* other thought which came in with that one, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him"; and this introduced by His betrayal. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you." They should plainly feel His loss; they should *seek* Him, but they could not go where He was. This was their condition. It was true of them, as of the Jews. The Jews nor the Church were to follow Him there. Both seek Him, even if differently; neither be, nor could come, where He was. But though not with Him they were His disciples, manifest in one thing, "a new commandment" (for He was One who could give "a new commandment"): "That ye love one another." It was a com-

mandment from Him to them, a sign in them (and being as such therefore on positive commandment) to unbelievers that they were His disciples. This was the sign to the world, and so on His commandments, and so applied to them. So the Lord knew that it would so act on the minds of men as an unknown thing, which must depend for its power on something out of this world, and verify thus the truth of discipleship to an absent spiritual working, a heavenly (Divine) Lord. There is also force in not merely "*commandment*," but "*as I have loved you*"; therefore so known as *His* disciples; this the standard and power, and therefore not only obedience but love "*one to another*." On the whole it is the full relationship resulting from the Lord's absence and their being left.

—31, 32. Christ's part; what relates to Him.

—33-35. The result of those associated with Him, 33 being the basis of the position on which it rests. But Peter was fixed upon natural affection to the Lord, commonly so called, which did not enter into the truths here stated; a mistake to be rectified. This great thing mentioned (verse 31) was to be done.

Jesus alone, He sets them, His disciples, in their consequent place. Curiosity would know, natural confidence assume to be in, the place, ignorance of which alone was proved by the proposal and the foolishness of self-confidence. Peter would know where the Lord went. Now he was to follow Him. He could not go then, but he was to follow Jesus. But he could not follow Him now; for now neither was there power in Peter nor the way made, the way of meeting the holi-

ness of God in death, and going into death in the power of life, and through death to God's presence, a solitary way within the veil. But he should follow Him indeed with power from a risen Lord, and yet within the veil in spirit, through the grace of a risen Lord. But Peter brought it to the very issue: "Why cannot I follow Thee *now*? I will lay down my life for Thy sake."

Now this did bring it to the point. If it were not where He was going, it was what He was going to do. It was precisely the immediate moral difficulty of where He the Lord was going. "I will lay down my life for Thy sake." But what a blessed word was it, the sure constancy of God in the midst of our weakness: "Thou shalt follow Me after"! But the utter weakness of the flesh in the strongest zeal of natural affection and purpose was to be shewn. "Wilt thou," says the patient, gracious Lord, "wilt thou lay down thy life for My sake? . . . The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied Me thrice." His zeal led him into the place where his flesh quailed before the power of Satan. But what a power in the flesh! A little maid laid low his boasted purpose. But he did follow Him after. He was led whither he would not, and the glory was there ready for him. The "why" was that he was Peter, one of us. But note the alike impossibility of one who believes, that is, who is brought to love Jesus, without given power, as of the unbeliever, to go where Jesus goes. It is only of God. "*As I said to the Jews . . . I say to you also now.*" We have specially to note the faithfulness of purpose in the total failure of man in the

flesh: "Thou canst not," "but thou *shalt*"; but having thrice denied Him.

—37. This was wonderful weakness.

As observed below, all that follows hangs on this notion of absence under the circumstances in verse 32, and the force is on "believe" (xiv. 1) in what immediately follows. He being thus absent, and like to be in great trouble, the Lord says, "Let not your heart be troubled." It hangs in fact in connection on the end of verse 35, the last being the episode of Peter's confidence in something else. When thus loving each other together, in any case let not their heart be troubled. How so? How had they comfort in God? Did they see Him? Was He in human sort present with them? They believed on Him. The same as of Jesus, Believe on Me. He was the object of faith as well as the giver of commandment.

In John xiii. we have, note, the voluntary acting of Christ's own love. But He does it in grace as a service. It is with the towel He is girded with He wipes their feet. In *v.* 20 it is "whom I *shall* send"; for, as He was about to go, His service in the world would have ceased, and His reception [been] impossible, unless those He should send brought men under this responsibility and into the blessing.

My present impression is that the supper the Lord instituted, the last supper, was not the paschal lamb itself. His eating the Passover with them was in general. As the paschal lamb was slain between the

two evenings, the putting away leaven was over [the] evening before. It was quite late when Jesus went out. Judas had agreed with the chief priests before. He went out to do it after the sop at supper, and goes and fetches the band. Thus Christ was sacrificed between the two evenings on the same day (Jewish) as He eat the Passover with His disciples. Hence John treats it as before the feast of the Passover. So it was, in Gentile computation, the day before; yet in the Passover. He was to depart out of this world. So in John xviii. 28: they go out into the hall of judgment, that they might eat the Passover.

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xii., xiii. The Jews being the perfection of God's creation-rest, Jesus is proposed as chief. This involved national redemption, resurrection (as of Abraham), and the like; and headship of the Gentiles; but all these deeper principles; that is, sin was in the world, and the Corn of Wheat must die. These, in their different parts, the Gospels manifest, with the ministry, the holy, gracious, perfect ministry of Jesus in the midst of these things, flowing from the depths of Divine wisdom directed by Divine love, in the union of patient obedience and love as a Man, as a Servant to God, to shew these things. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." But sin being, all these things fail in man, and Jesus dies as to and for them, and brings in, in resurrection, new things. The Jews are set aside, to whom in ordinance the Sabbath, God's creation-rest, had been given. The Church, God's

new creation, in the stability and security of the Word made flesh, and risen, who in the beginning, when God created, was, and created, come in here in power resting in that which created. "In the beginning was the Word," etc. All things were created by Him, and for Him, as in the flesh the Head of creation-blessing (here, in error and the craft of evil, the Irvingites take the Lord up, and thence the Church back here); but here dead, because creation was spoiled by sin. "My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I *work*"; no rest; work in their covenant characters, restoratively, redeemingly; but now Head of creation in redemption; but having in union associated, to present to Himself a glorious Church, with it takes gloriously the creation as His portion; they sons of God by adoption with Him. Then the Jews by grace and redemption (national) brought into creation-rest and Sabbath thereunder (because Satan, who led the world, is cast down, and put in the abyss) are the centre of new earthly glory with Christ by grace. Righteousness and promise not having met, grace and promise meet to God's glory (not man's), all being exalted in Jesus, and all things united (*ana-kephalaio-omai*) in Him the Son, and Son of Man; and He takes as Son of Man the earth again, all things here, and the Jews as the centre of it on earth, the nations blessed in them. He takes them when they were rejected, but in grace and stability. Then, all things being subjected (they could not enjoy in worship, because evil, or the power of evil, had come in), and the subjection shewn in the glorious Person of the Son of Man, and the dominion and power given to Him, He gives up the

Kingdom (perfect in all things), that all thus restored may be blessed worship, and God all in all; He, as Man, the subject Head of all intelligent blessing; and this in the end.

John's Gospel shews all the intermediate part, the operation part; that is, in Christ, the Word and Son; in all its scope as to His Person; rejection here, the position of the Church and Himself, and His relation with the Father. The other Gospels give details of parts, and while the economy of foundation is given in the Acts; and the detail and order and place of the Church in the Epistles, and its apostasy as in man here, the Apocalypse gives the end of all these things, and teaches (as to those of them which pass now) the Church to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus," come quickly. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that *heareth* say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen." Do not I hear, O Lord? In this my heart says, Come. My soul says, Come. We are here so as in a manner to be "sick of love"; yet in spirit so with Thee, and above this world's, living with Thee; set down with Thee; that we can say, "Thy will be done." Be Thy name, blessed Jesus, fully glorified by their power and ways. Yet Thou knowest me to be "sick of love," desiring Thy presence, holy and blessed Saviour, Lamb of God, our Lord, Prince of peace, King of kings, the Word of God.

Note. There is a contrast in John iii. between what the Old Testament gave (by the Spirit) the knowledge of; that is, between Jewish hopes, and truths connected

with it in prophetic instruction, and what Christ knew and could tell as come from heaven (verses 10 and 11). So in the end the two parts of John's testimony (29), His Messiahship, in which He had title to the bride, Jerusalem; a joy fulfilled to John, and Christ's position as come from above, and above all; One speaking the words of God without measure; the Son loved of the Father, to whom all was committed; in whom was found life, and unbelief in whom left wrath abiding on the unbeliever. IV., as the second, gave the character of millennial joy, purification changed into bridal wine, the nobleman's child gives, on the present quitting of Judæa, the saving life as a present thing by faith for the Jewish Remnant.

I judge also, in v., "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee," Christ was acting as a present historical fact within the limits of Divine Jewish government. In His doctrine which follows He goes out into the full title of His Person, above and beyond the precincts of Judaism. This introduction of His own proper glory in connection with the Father is connected with their rejection of Him, as a present thing, in spite of the fullest testimony (31-40). But it was to reject themselves. Coming in His Father's name, they would not have Him. This left them exposed to man's pretensions, into whose hands, in Satanic presumption, they would fall. Moses himself would be their condemnation.

Hence (vi.) what He was as rejected for those who received Him is brought out. He could accomplish messianic promises in power; as, before, He was

Jehovah that healed, so now that satisfied the poor with bread; Prophet, proved such; refusing to be King, through man, but nourishing, according to the counsels of God, in His humiliation and death, those who, tossed in the world in consequence of His rejection and absence, [were] introduced into the new thing (verse 30) by resurrection, of which He was the example (verse 60), entering as Son of Man into the heavenly place in which He was before He descended. Hence it is sovereign grace and eternal life.

Besides the moral instruction, I judge that the beginning of the viii. shews that He can avoid condemning the worst and most flagrant state of Israel while convicting all who choose to place themselves on the ground of the Law in Israel. I have already noticed the rejection of word and work (viii. 38 and ix. 4), mark the two (see x. 33). X. belongs to ix., though flowing all from the revelation that He will have the sheep out of the sheep-yard where they were kept; as the Gentile sheep by His death too. XI., xii. are what He was and might have been for the Jews, if received: Son of God, able to raise from the dead; Son of David; Son of Man, the Gentiles coming to Him when among the Jews. These chapters answer to the beginning of chapters we have noticed; what He could, v., vi.; what He could not, vii. Then before the Jews (viii.) what He was as light for conviction; but (xii. 35, 36) entire abandonment of them; a light for a time, but which hides itself; and then their blindness shewn (as announced by the prophet) judicially (*v.* 40) but in the revelation of the glory of Jehovah Himself, as Christ.

XIII., what He now is for His beloved disciples, His *own* in *the world*, in view of all His glory, and in spite of all our sin (*vv.* 2, 3). Verses 31, 32, we have the true full moral character of His death, and the result in *present* glory, which is in connection with the present thing in title of His Person. Hence the disciples could not follow, [any] more than the wicked Jews. Flesh and blood has no place there. But the power of death would be given (36). It was not in man to attempt. It was to plunge oneself into the denial of Christ, whose course and revelation as Son of God supposed and involved death.

Chapter XIV.

These chapters to xvii. are all regular and distinct subject, we may say introduced by *v.* 32 before (xiii. 32). Believe on Me absent, yet on Me divinely present, but as absent. "There are many *abiding* places in My Father's house." I am not going merely to escape trouble. If it were not thus, I would not have kept it concealed from you, and kept you through to this point when I was to go and escape for Myself. I am going to prepare a place for you, not shrinking from the place

you are in, leaving you. You could not go there now, but I go to prepare a place.

Nor is this all. If He went to prepare a place for them it was for a definite purpose, not in vain, leaving their arrival there uncertain. If He went and prepared a place for them, if that was His errand, if that was what He went *for*, He (blessed for ever be His name!) would not leave it incomplete: "I come again." It is a great truth, not merely a fact, not merely what He would do. It was part of the necessary truth of their concernment in His sure and fulfilling and establishing love. Do not be troubled, I come again, and I will receive you (here His love was in exercise), to *Myself*; that where I am, ye may be. Here was the way; for this embraces the whole case in which that would be met. They must wait awhile. "Whither I go, ye cannot follow Me now." He must prepare a place for them. Still His love, His continually serving love, to their glory with Him. They must bear with Him doing this. Love for them alone (forgive Him, as it were, the wrong), this comfort He must have, be spent in His love for them, and bring them in in peace. And so it must be, for who else could have done it? And this though one should deny Him in passing through it. But He must have His own way.

Neither was this all; we shall see more yet. It was not, observe, "Where I go," but "Where I am." First, His love to have them in the same place; and, secondly, they would not be where He was going then properly, but where "I am" in the day He took them to Himself. Yet have they to pass through and follow Him

morally in His own time; that is, through the suffering. See xix. 20 and following. Where He was, that is, when He came again, they would *be*; but where He *went* they knew; for though they were distinct as to position and relationship, yet were they identified, that is to say, in His Person.

Note also how they are said, "Ye cannot follow Me now," because it was through death, and they had not the power then to pass through death, as was fully shewn in Peter, not having the power of the resurrection life in the Spirit. But afterwards they could. For it is not merely His going to the Father, but passing through death; for therein He took the power of resurrection life, and was "determined" (as Man, connected with the impossibilities and sufferings of man), "to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." That is, He took, as regarded man under sin, Sonship with the Father; as it is said, looking at Him thus as the Head of office, "This day have I begotten Thee." He entered into this position, into which the believer altogether enters, declaring the Father as Son through death and resurrection. In Jesus it is going to the Father, which is the gist of all this. But that going is from Jesus's absence, from death and resurrection. Hence they did follow Him after; some, as a *consequence*, actually passing through death therefore.

And hence our glory is more than it would have been had Jesus not been away, our glory in that day, because we know Him as gone to the Father, and as set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, on the Father's

throne; a glory in which we now see Him in a righteousness which could bring nothing unsuitable, not a spot or shade, upon the Father's throne (this is most blessed), but specially rest on the glory of Sonship therein. Therefore, says the Lord, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know"; because they saw the Father in Him; and hence, knowing Him, not only knew Him, the Way, but the Father the end in Him. Blessed unity of glory! and this in Him a Man. Well may we adore, and find Jesus marvel at their unbelief. But His sheep hear His voice. Thomas saith, "We know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" Now, this is the very point we do know, being believers, where He is gone; we see Jesus, we see Sonship in Him, Sonship "*as of an only begotten with a father.*"

Here is the present position of the children's glory. They see Jesus not ashamed, by reason of being all one, to call them brethren. Him with whom they are associated at the right hand and in the Father's glory, they are one with Him, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, and He as such is at the right hand of the Father, and His Spirit is in them, so that they see Him there in the fulness of the glory. They see the Father in Him, in Him, in the Father's throne, and known as Man, as one with Him. Hence the Church, looking at Him as there, and coming in the glory to take it into it with Him, is said to be "the Church" (of the Thessalonians) "which is in God the Father." Here is the sufficing point, seeing the Father. But Jesus in one with the Father, and the Father in Him; and in Jesus we do see the Father.

Our Lord's answer therefore was, "I am the way," the way to the Father; for knowing the Father in Jesus is the way to the Father, in Jesus slain; and the truth for God is in this, the perfect witness and manifestation of God; not a flaw, not a defect, in shewing forth God, the truth of what He was, and not only of what He was, but the central truth round which all else revolved too, of the mystery in which God was unfolding Himself, all things that the creature (instructed) could know, the unity of all God's moral ways. And this embraces a wide scope, as see Col. i. 15-20, etc. Moreover, it was eternal life to know the Father, and Jesus Christ whom He had sent, which is here supposed, and the subject.

But there is more than this in it. I, Jesus, am the Way of access. It is in the knowledge of Me that the renewed soul comes to the Father; the truth of these things with which the soul is conversant in coming to the Father; that is, in My Person; and not only so, but the life in which the soul has vivifying apprehension, the life and power in which it holds communion with these things, with the Father. For it is as one with Him so quickened we stand in this blessed apprehension and relationship.

Truth is the substance of a revealed thing, the reality of what is spoken. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." He is the Way, and as the Truth and the Life are these things brought into operation so as to bring one in the way. And not only so, but if they had known Him they would have known the Father also, the end they sought for. In thus being the Way and the Truth and the Life, He was the revealer in His

Person in unity with the Father, as perfectly leading them to, and revealing, all in fulness.

"The Father": this is the blessed character of our Lord's thus manifestation to us. He was "God manifest in the flesh"; but as the Son He was all three things of which He had spoken, but therein revealed also the Father. The Persons in the Covenant, for it pleased that in Him should all fulness dwell, the fulness of the Godhead, dwelt in Him bodily; and thus knowing Him we were introduced through the glory of His Person into the knowledge of, and fellowship (as a creature) with, all that fulness. Here only we remark, as following the text, that we should in revelation know "The Father." "And from henceforth"; that is, I take it, from the rejection of the Son of Man, they would not see Him in the veil of His (not dead Messiah character), but as the Son of God in the fulness of the glory revealed in Him, and therefore seeing the Father.

From the 31st verse of the 13th chapter this character of Jesus opens out. He was as dead from that act, and was stating the result as specially here: "From henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him." For He speaks as knowing Him, and this fulness was now revealed in Him, His necessary glory, which must break forth if rejected, Who He was, which would necessarily be manifested if slain, for He would necessarily rise again, "for it was not possible He should be holden of it"; and be "marked out Son of God in power . . . by resurrection of the dead." Now, though revealed in a certain sense, as in Matt. xvi. to Peter, yet hidden in His living as in His unglorified state, but the veil then rent,

and the glory there seen which was seen in Him. Now, on Judas's going out this was the thing He had to reveal, telling it us before it came to pass. His own mind had entered into it, as we saw in verses 31, 32: "Now is the Son of Man glorified." This is very blessed and clear, true always in Him. Now the veil just to be taken off and He preparing their minds for the glory; for let us see the structure and position of this chapter.

The Lord had said that where He went His disciples could not go, and declared the perfect impotency of the flesh (of Peter) that if it attempted it would only deny Him deliberately; that is, over and over again. He thereon gives them the ground on which they would have much further blessing, and much greater even now, than if He stayed with them. In the first place He was going to prepare a place for them, and if He went for such errand He would come again, and receive them to Himself. Not He stay with them in this miserable world, of which He at any rate could feel the sorrow, but prepare a place for them; not such as we had prepared for Him, evil over good, not good over evil; a place of His preparing, suited for *His* bringing them into it, and if so come again (for He loved them much), and receive them to Himself, that where He was, there they might be also. Their hearts were not therefore to be troubled. There were many *abiding* places there, even in His Father's house; and He went to prepare a place for them. This to take the trouble from them. He would not have brought them thus far else. Here was but a tabernacle for any.

But the great central point was they were to believe

on Him (they did so in God), and so find blessing. And what then came in, they knew where He went, and the way. They would know hence Him as one with the Father, and on the Father's throne, know Him in His personal glory and that which vindicated it to them and therein; know the Father and, by the Spirit (given by Him from the Father, the gift of God), have fellowship with the Father; and being indeed in union with the Son the consequence of association with Him in His risen and ascended glory, in union with the Father, rather than in His human love; that is, I mean, His love to them while in our nature upon earth; for indeed His love was the Good Shepherd's. The power of association, or into which we were associated, was different; but they had the comfort of knowing where He went, and the way. But here it was rather what was in Jesus and what was in them, and to them where He was ascended as their fulness, than living with Him there.

The great point was going to the Father. This must be in the glory of Sonship, and so risen, specially sin being in the world, that is, through death. Therefore, hence, passing through death and to the Father (being righteous) were one. They could not therefore follow Him now; but being risen with Him now in spirit and power, they would know, He being upon the Father's throne, His Person with the Father, the glory of the Father in Him, and fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus. Till we see this unity we cannot understand this chapter. "*Henceforth*" is therefore our Lord's word from the time of His giving Himself up to death.

But if it had been only thus we might have been defective in the apprehension of His Person. Philip says therefore, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Our Lord asserts the same glory of His Person and unity as when ascended, though not thus manifested: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?" It was true in His life though gloriously manifested to us (in spirit) in His sitting on His Father's throne, and shewing the Father's glory. "*With you*": "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." For indeed all the glory of the Father was in Him, being the Son, being who He was. They could not see Him without seeing the Father; they could not know Him, the Son, without knowing the Father also. What had he known of Him? "Dost thou not believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him?" Could anything more shew His Divine glory?

The words which follow I believe to be connected with these: "I am in My Father, and My Father in Me." "I speak not of Myself." And, "The Father that dwelleth in Me," etc. He could not say, But the Father speaketh; for the Son was the word of the Father. He did not speak of Himself, but He could not distinguish the Persons here. He spoke the word of God, as in the Father He spake as the Word of God. This manifested His unity with the Father; namely, that He did not speak "*from Myself*."

That the Father did the works proved that the Father dwelt in Him (equivalent glory). Thus while He hid His glory He really told it; but both told on the same point, only that the first was clearly the most blessed,

the care of the sheep. "Believe *Me* that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake." Now, the latter surely proved that the Father was in Him; but it could be and was used here only to prove the truth of His word, "Believe Me for." The "believe Me" was depending on His Person, and brought into communion in affiance on His word with the Father. If they could not see that He was in the Father, and therein know the value of His word as speaking the words of *God*, being so one with the Father, let them take the evidence of His truth from the works He did; which indeed was from the Father *dwelling* in Him, thus shewing His Person even in their despisal of it, though, so to speak, at the other end in His apparent humiliation, in which they did not see His Person as Son of God, nor know His word as God's word; though it were so that "My Father worketh hitherto, and *I* work," but here of the union thus revealing the glory of the Person.

—12. I have spent or delayed several days waiting as to light on this verse, to know the Lord's mind in it; and I certainly find rest in my mind. Who does not from the Lord? The truth of the Lord is the first settled position of our souls; His power, all power being His in heaven and in earth, the next great point (on His resurrection) that we know. Knowing this, and exercised in His perfect love, we have to exercise faith in His will, the divine purpose. What I desire to know is His will, His mind, in the matter; nothing else. Would to God I could do all miracles, were it His glory and will. Rather would I have Him glorified than all the miracles in the world.

It is for the Church and for Christ, not for fancy. This was the point in the quails (there was failure). This is the proposal of the tempter to the Son of Man (the Lord), on the pinnacle of the temple, wherein He was perfect; in the making bread of stones.

A miracle then is not *always* to the glory of God, always obedience. Does it make miracles unimportant? Far from it; but for God's glory, not man's. If we seek our own there is no righteousness in it. This is the great point, the glory of Christ. Existing miracles are to His glory. Hence, may be, the desire for miracles, as in the prayers after the Council. But miracles are addressed to the unbelief of men. Hence the desire for them when they do not exist *may be* evil, the occasion of the surest reproach. "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it." Hence faith founded on miracles alone is rejected faith; that is, faith not trusted to, no vital faith at all, not enduring faith.

But miracles are the proof of the glory of Christ. Hence rejected miracles are a proof of the positive hardening of the natural man. Now, here we have the character of the dispensation chiefly, not the extent of the fact. I say, rather than the extent, because it is a great principle. It is not looked at in miracles in the ordinary sense of the word universal. Were it so there would be no special gifts at all. It is the result in dispensation of His going to the Father, the witness of His (the Lord's) identity with Him as in glory. It was necessary to the dispensation as the way of the dispensed glory. Hence it is rested on faith, in that (in Him in whom it is revealed)

it is not "*every one that believes*," as concerning eternal life universal assertion, but a great principle which has its truth where it is revealed; and one person doing it would have been sufficient to prove; not sufficient peradventure to God's goodness or for man's weakness, but for the truth of the thing. Not that this excuses us *in any wise* for the low estate of the Church, or our works being so few. If our faith were greater surely the fruits would be more.

But we must remember that the works and fruits are but the witness, aye, the weak witness of the glory—not the glory. Multiply them too far, it would not be the glory, but rather disprove it, as evincing the continuance of the evil under such ministration, and appear to shew it a feeble instrument of remedial process, not the witness of that glory which was above all the evil. Comfort, present comfort, as it would be to us to vindicate from the evil, and desirable as a present witness, I mean to us, which our hearts would yearn after to His glory, as present with us. Nor do I exculpate any, I only affirm it is not "*every one that believes*."

The great point is it is demonstration, not fulfilment; the other, eternal life is the thing given, connected with faith; hence the question trustworthiness for Christ's glory, none such as to eternal life. "He counted me worthy [faithful], putting me into the ministry." But I put no limit to faith. It is an "Amen, Amen," a great principle resulting from Christ's going to the Father. This was the point, the point to be proved (in condescension to us,) the point here, but put as a result, the natural result, that the defect might be manifestly ours, not God's;

for power was not wanting. Now, the character of it was this: it was the exhibition of the resurrection and ascension life of Christ; the character of service, not the number of the things done.

The works which Jesus did were witness that the Father dwelt in Him, and His words to be heard. They were works, upon the face of them, worthy of a man, and proving One with whom God was. There was an energy suited to such a display. But now the risen Jesus, one with the Father, was to be "declared" (not Messiah, for Messiah surely would do no greater miracles than this Man's, but) "the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection"; "of God"; and not only so, but His being by the right hand of God ascended. Hence in His being gone to the Father, and taking this higher official place, He would shed forth brighter and more powerful witness, suitable to that place in witness whereunto He was going, His new place of glory with the Father, new in accomplished position, for it was the glory which otherwise He had before the world began. Hence, inasmuch as it was the glory of the Lord absent (bodily) on high in the glory of the Father, "*he that believes*" was the instrument of its testimony, its exhibition, its exhibition to the world.

The publicity of its character was one thing connected with the works being greater, the manifestation of public power in exaltation. And this is the force (it seems to me) of the argument or course of instruction in Luke xii., from 2 to 10, which note. By the works which Jesus did it was shewn (verse 10) that the Father dwelt in Him, looking at Him now a Man upon earth, but now going

into His proper glory: that is, as to His Person crowned with the witness of who He was in Person sitting on the Father's throne. The works were correspondingly to bear witness of that which now was evolved as the object of the believer's faith. This was not witness of His glory as of the Father dwelling in Him (though that remained necessarily true), but of His unity with the Father now brought by His position as an object of faith into actual developed manifestation (*horismenos*). Of this the believer was witness, who held His place upon earth in the work done. It was a displayed glory of His Person, displayed to the believers who saw Him as it were (compare Stephen's martyrdom), and by the fruits of that faith, by the Spirit, by the believer.

And this characterizes all from the principle of resurrection life to the works and miracles done in the name of Jesus in the days of the Apostles. Witness the 3000 converted at once; witness its universal publication. It embraced the world. It was now not, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles," etc., but "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." It was shewn, not in Dorcas or the like as contrasted with Jairus's daughter, but in the universality of their character, *in the resurrection character of their* own lives, the power of His *resurrection*. Lazarus returned to bodily life; they were alive with eternal (compare the extent, Acts xv., Jewish, xix. 11, 12, Paul and Gentiles), the power of death gone as to all of it in the word, the resurrection and glory as on the Father's throne, of Christ demonstrated in all the power, demonstration and power, exhibited by the apostles or whosoever "believes."

Nothing can be more strikingly illustrative of this than the Acts of the Apostles. This was the witness to the world (which indeed brought in condemnation), the witness of the proper glory of Christ as one with the Father, as sitting on His throne, though rejected. This afforded to the believer, established, the great point of faith and only consolation to one now left by Him on earth, seemingly deserted, that it was much better in all ways, for He was on the Father's throne; the witness of His Person far more blessed than if *merely*, however blessed that was, upon earth; in universality and publicity more than in difference of works; save in resurrection, quickening power; as see the difference of Lazarus's and our Lord's resurrection. The "*greater*" was shewn, greater works were done; but it was not in mere surpassingness of physical miracles, but as this competently glorified the Son, therefore resurrection power (all power in heaven and in earth), and bore testimony to them all around, so there was a testimony *to* them, immediate pledge of the ground of their affiance in Him as connected with the Father, the all-prevailing power of His name in all their looking to the Father, its acceptance, and therefore theirs with Him, their being brought as sons into nearness with the Father (which was all attributable to Him), a pledge to themselves, the full revelation of the Father's character, to whom they were approximated in Him. Whatever they asked the Father in His name *He* would do it, that the Father might be glorified in the Son. The Son does it for the Father's glory. In the other case the Spirit did it for the Son's glory.

This is the main thing, the immediate intimacy we are brought into, and in which indeed all are one; Christ shewn to be one with the Father in His throne of glory, and we in Him having access, that He, competent to do so, may glorify the Father's name as Son in us, doing all that is asked by the sons. For here it is "*will do*" before we do it, evidence merely of the absent glory of Christ, though the perfect glory, glory of Christ with the Father, having the one throne, as one and equal (as the object of faith). Now, as our nearness is shewn, and the nearness of His Person as Son, what we ask of the Father He takes up, and does the greater thing. Yea, whatever we ask He will do. Here His glory, and simply in title, to say what He will do, as before of His zeal for His Father's glory, with whom He shewed Himself one. Thus was the great circle of His position, service, and their unity brought out. There was more behind as to their direct, actual position upon earth, their actual estate and condition. This is all very feebly brought out, but verse 12 shews the administrative result of the Son's sitting on the Father's throne in the works they did, in which He was glorified, though shewn in them, as the Father in Him, by His works on earth (compare Acts iii. 12).

—13. What He would still do, for the Father's glory, towards the Church. The world would not see Him, but they would see the left witness of the Spirit in them asserted to His risen glory out of it. But the Son would still be in Person working towards them, the continuance of His acting in witness towards them. Verse 13 rests it on "My name, that the Father may be glorified in the

Son." Verse 14, the extent of His power: "*If* . . . *anything* . . . *I will do.*" This is the general great truth.

Then comes the manner of its administration: "If ye love Me." This is rather an answer to Peter's unwise proposal, as the former of the trouble in which they should seek Him, how and as what they would now plainly see Him, that though after the flesh they sought Him, yet they knew where He went, and the way. The Father's glory was really in Him. He was going to the Father, and going to prepare a place for them where were many abodes. If they had *known* Him while *with them* they would have known His Father and the meaning of His going away (*v.* 7). If they *loved* Him, as Peter so strongly, and in one sense so truly, under God's mercy, asserted, the natural consequence was keeping His commandments, though the "*ye love*" is an emphatic word; the "*Me*" is also; they are conjointly so, the previous part, and brought out the glory of His Person, and consequently where He went; this their association with Him upon earth, as loving Him known to them in Person, then known, and the consequence, "*My* commandments." From verse 7 in a measure hangs the discourse to end of verse 14. From verse 15 a new ground is taken; not now the perception of the glory through the knowledge of Him, but the consequences appropriated to them that loved Him, so knowing Him even then.

A great additional comfort and boon was to be bestowed upon them, blessings of which they were to be the depositaries, as heaven was of Him. "Keep My commandments"; this is the way I shall recognize you;

and "I will ask the Father, and He will give you" (from Him it was to come forth, for we know now our fellowship with the Father) "another Comforter, which shall abide with you *for ever*." "He will give." It is from the Father, as we have seen; but the subject of the gift is the Comforter Himself; as God otherwise gave His Son, whom now in bodily presence deprived of; but this should not be thus taken away. He gave it that it should abide with them for ever; that is, the Holy Ghost to be in the place of Christ, but here designated as "the Spirit of truth." This is His first grand character.

The world cannot receive Him, as not the object of bodily apprehension or knowledge. For this presence of the Holy Ghost was not necessarily a manifested one, that the world could know, but which was known by virtue of, and because of, His dwelling, abiding with them, and *being in them*. It was not therefore that which was, or was known, by being exhibited in outward signs, but indeed the comfort confined to the saints, and known by the peculiarity that He dwelt in them, so that they knew Him, and the world did not. The other thing had been spoken of before, distinct from the indwelling of the Comforter. This was a distinct thing, and stood on a distinct ground, "*with you*"; that is, it is with you it is "*He abides*." It is a prerogative act in which He establishes His own constancy, not man's: "*and shall be in you*," the manner of His enjoyment, and blessing of the saints by Him. In some sort He was "*with you*" then in the Person of Christ. But it is not that, I think, He means here.

Here was a distinct, blessed, and very settled and

dispensed order and promise, the abiding and indwelling of the Comforter; I mean of dispensation, "*covenant*," an ordinance of God this "*abode*" of the Comforter, *par autois*, and His being *en autois*. But more than this, they would not in any wise be left orphans. He would come to them. The world (yet a little while) would see Him no more; but they would see Him, and because He lived they would live. He was not going to die. The world would not see Him. To their natural man they might account it death; but as to them the real interpretation of it was He was going to the Father. The veil (of His flesh) was just going to be rent that they might see into His glory, and because He lived there, really lived, *they* should live also, for they saw, and they were one with, Him. Consequently He says, "In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." This path of association with Christ in obedience involves the whole thing.

He is then concerned to pray to bring full blessing of the knowledge of their real place, His real place for them to them, when by the Comforter they saw His glory. They knew that He was in the Father, but at the same time they knew that they were in Him. For thus seeing Him by the Spirit they knew their identity with Him; and He was in them, by virtue of which they saw all these things, "for he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." There was the peculiar order (as we have seen) of the dispensation in which they stood, seeing, not as they did or ought to have done, the Father in Him, but their present (revealed to them as ever true) portion, Him (whom they loved) in the Father. But this necessarily

involved their being in Him. Otherwise they would not have seen *Him* at all, for the world saw Him no more. And how was this sealed and known? He was in them. This was their position. For there is a break in the matter here again; that is, from verses 15 to 20 inclusive; and there are two parts: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." There is the consequence set first. Then Jesus's "I will ask." Now, we are sanctified to obedience, but then the Spirit by which we are so is grieved when it is not so in the love of Jesus; and therefore, though it be there, it is as though it was not there. Hence the Comforter was their portion, and there for their portion; for being quickened they are sanctified, quickened, to obedience, and Jesus asks the Father for them as members of His body—one Spirit. So it is, but not being practically obedient they have little of the joy or comfort of it, they walk comparatively speaking in darkness, as though they were really orphans when they are not; for He doth abide with them for ever. It is the Church's position, if there be any Church at all, I mean vitally, which there must be, or the Lord has failed. It is the Lord's word, necessarily He shall abide with you "*for ever*." Being given, it is given to them *who do believe*. The consequence of this was they would know, they would not be ignorant, and they would know more than now by virtue of this indwelling Spirit. Jesus in the Father, they in Him, and He in them; they would know this in and by this union and indwelling in corporation to Him so glorified, and that far from dead. Such was the union: because He lived, they would live,

and by this life, the Comforter being present, know the union.

The Lord having spoken of the presence of the Comforter (this was the gift to the believers, and Jesus coming to them in His union with them, as Christ, filled with His Spirit), He now goes on to speak of His manifestation and abiding, that is, by virtue of the union of the Father with Him (as objectively His with the Father), the abiding of the Father and the Son with them. This was the portion of the informed believer (*chanochs*, taught in the house.) "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, that is the person who loves Me." Thus he is distinguished: having them, and keeping them. The world will say, How keep them, if we have not them? But the saint knows it is grace to have them, that it is grace finds them out by the revelation of God, that (found with desire through the grace of God) they are treasured with delight in that grace; that the discernment of grace finds them. How came John to be leaning on the bosom of Jesus? How, further, Paul to say, "The things which I speak are the commandments of the Lord"? Whence the judgment of the spiritual as to the Lord's mind? However, it is he that has and keeps them.

We may suppose an intellectual having, and of course, some kept. No love here. We may suppose a small measure of keeping, and little known what they are sign of. Little love here. However, he that has and keeps. There is the Lord's work of love, and such shall be loved of My Father. So it will, so it must, from the Father's love and its object, be; for now we have them the subject, not exercised on Jesus in the Father as the object. But

what a link of love! Loved of My Father! What can Jesus do but love him? and how shewn? (their love was on Him; here was another link of this necessary bond of love). In shewing Himself. They were loving Him; but one that is loved of His Father, on whom the stamp of love is, he will see Him; Jesus will reveal Himself, the portion and centre from the Father, and from the energy Himself of this love. Judas understood thus much, that He spoke of shewing Himself to such a one, as one with Jesus, and not to the world. He asks how; for the questions of unbelief or of reason are the occasion of the full answers of God in love, where it is anxiety towards Him, not closing of heart.

And this was a great point, all hingeing on this sense with the Father and of His abiding interest in them: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." This was an actual resulting case, "he will keep My words"; not merely now obedience to found commandments, but the guardianship of His word, that which is associated with a personal acquaintanceship with His mind expressed. There will be the intercourse, so to speak, of mind. "And My Father will love him," as so acquainted with the mind of Christ, the Son, the source on which it all rests. "And we will come, and make our abode with him," this communed dwelling with of the Father and the Son making the closing portion of the believing, obedient, loved disciple to whom Jesus manifests Himself; not to the world, their portion apart from it.

It is beautifully and blessedly in contrast with, "In My Father's house are many "*abodes*"; and then the climax of the intermediate (and everlasting as the subject of

blessing) present portion of His people is that the Father and He make their "*abode*" with them. Oh, what a portion! Oh, what a perfectness of present portion! For it is as present portion we have to look at it, the *to menon* objectively of the Spirit's revelation (2 Cor. iii.) First, the object ought to have been learnt in person in Jesus, then the Comforter —Jesus comes—thus in gift and dispensation the portion of gift to them. This involves their union being in Him; hence knowledge of who, in whom, He was, and the Father, they in Him and He in them, then the consequence, practical doing of His commandments, having them as such a one would, and His word; and not only His manifesting Himself to them as obedient but as keeping His word, the Father and He in this blessed communion of presence making their abode with such a one.

You will remark that from verse 21 it is personal. This closes the personal portion of the disciples, their everlasting portion. The contrast is short and simple: "He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words." Not here *word*, for that is the taught mind, to the willing heart and ear, the taking the mind as such. But here the words are not kept; not commandments, for they are not taken as such. The Lord does not here press them as such. His words are unheeded. Not so the believer. "And the word," taken all together, "which ye hear is not Mine." I am not speaking of Myself as a Man, but of the Father which sent Me. He is necessarily in question by it, for it is *autou tou p.* He was not only or merely sent to speak for, but indeed while the words were His they were the Father's, and if they were His they were the Father's;

hence the responsibility and sign of sin in rejecting Him, not seeing the Father in Him.

This was the point He urged, the great point "not Mine, but of the. . . . " The Father sent; but not only so; being the Son, the Father was in Him, and during His humiliation this was the point to recognize, that His glory might be sustained. These things He said being with them, the right time. It was the association of it with His own personal love to them, and with His Person, for in His Person these things were now centred. In Him faith perceived the centre of their truth and the love that made them ours. Their display in order of glory after His resurrection did not make them less dear as known in Him. Nay, they ever centred in His Person. We knew we had them all.

But there was another point, not the association with Him in person and affection, but the wide instruction of the Spirit of God present concerning His glory and all truth. Here the Holy Spirit is so called; before "the Spirit of truth," and so subsequently He is called "the Spirit of truth," as that which the world cannot receive, but this being the question. But He is a Holy Spirit solely to the saints, the Holy Ghost, that Comforter whom the Father would send in Jesus's name, "*the Paraclete.*" He comes in here more substantively; before, asked for by the Son, and given to them; here, sent of the Father in His name to teach them all things; a wide and blessed word; at the same time associating them with the remembrance of Messiah's words, the remembrances of His people.

I feel this distinction of importance. No person can

read the Gospels without seeing that forth-coming of what Messiah was, the exercise of spirit in His humiliation, the sweet breathings through of the Divine mind. Yet the ordering of all things suited the circumstances in which they were expressed, and expression of One so walking in righteousness, walking in subjection, and though a Son learning obedience by the things which He suffered, Jewish things, yet wise things, perfect things, wise things; and we have no need of wise things "in public," of that which is unveiled. The hidden, subject character of Christ stamping a power upon all that He was and said, this fund of gracious forbearance and wise expression in His subject estate, exceeding perfectness of spirit and truth in living life here, the Spirit would call to mind in the Epistles. In the Spirit we see all the glory unfolded, all things taught; not, "Ye cannot bear them now," but, "Let us go on to perfection." For in the glory unveiled "the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things." When it came from the Father, the sanctifying Spirit to the disciples, it would do anything but obliterate the former; it would remember to us the precious and savour-bearing words of Jesus, and besides that open out the wide scene of glory and knowledge of truth which His breaking the bands of death had opened out, or us into their personal position. He had told them it was material to know from His lips who was the Truth before He went. It might have been feeling else, or so supposed But all the knowledge of things in it was left for the time when the results of that position should be given in the presence of the Comforter. There were promises, great and precious promises, rather a condition of blessing by the presence

of the Spirit and revelation of the Father and the Son. But there was an immediate result of association. They were not the result of the things promised. That was to be waited for, because known by them. But there was an immediate, present result from and by Christ, besides this scope of hope: "Peace I leave with you"; a present solid condition in the midst [of], or as throwing its power over, all the varied exercises which thought however blessed could afford.

But there is more in this sentence, I am persuaded, than meets the eye in common. The fact is stated; but it is [in] the result of His going away I learn it. All that He here speaks of is the consequence of their state by virtue of His going to the Father. It includes that, and while it involves what He had (been and) said upon earth, and the Comforter coming, the time of its place with them was His leaving them. He left peace with them as One to whom it belonged to leave. He was peace with God, the Man of peace with God. This He left, whatever the advancement of His glory; this He did not take away with Him to heaven. He left it here; their portion, as His; and still as before. This is most blessed; there was "*good pleasure*" in Him. He knew it, and delighting in God was answerably in perfect delight in Him. So we in our new nature, and in Him in fact. And this is what He has left us, that perfect acceptance in the good pleasure of God in which He delighted and found rest in. He left it; for it was His, and in Him. He gave it; for none had it else; in intrinsic relationship in renewal of mind. But He did leave peace. He gave us His own peace, that in which

He stood in its perfectness. Peace He gave to us. But how could He give His peace? It was clearly only in spirituality of mind; for to be so is life and peace; but so as that it was by and given of Him. The spiritual mind has peace because of (for they go together) what Jesus here spoke of, but Jesus's own peace, His position with God, with the Father. This was what was given in sense and blessing.

Then comes the word, "Not as the world giveth give I unto you"; and here is the power and blessing of the sentence; for the world gives consumable fruits, and inexpensive, though gainful to itself; not so Jesus: the gift of peace was at the cost of Himself; they of their abundance; but He, taking the necessity and burden of evil, left peace for them. Peace He had, and might have gone so away to His own glory. But He did not so. He passed through the evil, gave Himself for them, that (purchasing them, freed from sin, at the cost of Himself,) the peace He had as righteousness with God might be theirs. It was the manner of the gift. Then the infinite difference that was here distinguished: the gift of peace was the gift of Himself to perfect trouble for them, all perfect trouble, His own peace. But that as sinners they could not have but through the sacrifice of Himself. But, being given, He in perfect, self-sacrificing love did give them peace.

It took away fear as well as trouble: "Do not be troubled." There was definiteness of object (Christ was not gone, that is, lost; the same is seen in Rev. xix.), known and enjoyed, and that in a much higher way. "Do not fear"; there was constancy of peace. Christ

gave peace. He was able, as sacrificing Himself, and that in *the certainty of* love. Therein there was nothing to fear: God was love, and He was given for them. "Hereby know we love." Trouble is uncertainty. All from verses 1 to 25, took that away. "Fear," the opposite of peace, it "hath torment." But peace given, as the world could not give, took that away; for "perfect love casteth out fear"; and "herein is love" (1 John iv. 10-17, etc.); but here the fact of grace. But this gift implied all other gifts; for it was the necessity of *such* love; not as giving being a reason for giving no more, but the proof of love, and that in the highest degree; all else but the making good the necessity of that. Christ's own peace in the world, and given to us as removing sin, is the measure of our not fearing.

"Ye have heard how I said, I go away, and come again to you." This removed their uneasiness as to themselves. It was not disappointment or death, but going to return. But if they had loved *Him* they would have rejoiced because He was going to the Father. For the Church looking at Jesus (at Christ officially) is given as one with Him an interest and delight in His full joy. If they had loved *Him* they would have rejoiced He was going from sorrow to full joy at God's right hand. In all these things Christ is spoken of as the complex Person whom we know, whereby we have communion and fellowship with Him, the incarnate One. In the same way we see the Jewish Church's joys and interest in Psalms xx., xxi. beautifully illustrating and expressing this, as for them. Nothing can be more beautiful than giving the Church an interest in His happi-

ness at such a moment, in its sorrow, of giving it such express identity with Himself. It was not as though they were left, but He was going to the place of His glory and blessing. They were so one with Him; that was their happiness.

And with what delicacy and (to them) exalting condescension does He bring them into identity with Himself *then*, instead of leaving them with their thoughts here, where only their sorrowful and undignified selves would be found! I am going to greater glory, and you are one with Me in affection and interest. "My Father is greater than I," Jesus incarnate, in office and position in this revelation of glory of which I am assuming the Head; and you are made heirs in blessing, and so in this Covenant, as men call it. It is so in the way in which we know God revealed in dispensation in this wondrous economy in which all the Trinity is revealed. Not that which is essentially in Godhead is here spoken of; the difference of Persons in Trinity is never so spoken of; but revealed in knowledge. Ye would rejoice because *I*; for My Father is greater than Me. Of course nothing else could be sound. It is not in office properly; for in one sense the Father takes the office of Servant of Christ about His people; nor in Godhead, for that is not the question; but as known to the disciples in the revelation of diathecal relationship.

The incarnate Son holds the subordinate place in the way we know Him, as all the Scriptures testify in speaking of it from Genesis; Prov. viii., which particularly shews it; through to the express revelation in the Apocalypse. Indeed, as all blessedness is in dwelling

on it connected with His glorious unity with the Father, so no sort of difficulty arises at all in a simple believer's mind, but blessing and strength; because it is believed it does believe. In the Covenant the Son holds the place of service; that is, in our knowledge of Him.

"And now I have told you before it come to pass"; that is, this great truth about His going away, etc., to His Father. This testimony before was evidence of truth. Compare Isaiah xli. 22, 23; and before, xiii. 19. All, whatever the gift, turns to this, to revert to it, believing in Jesus and His glory. This is the *great end of God*, a great end of previous testimony, though the Church has another portion in it. So also all apparent sorrows become confirmatory of faith; apparent discreditings turn to accredit the truth and strength of our hope in the Lord. But this includes the glory; that is, the knowledge of it by the presence of the Spirit; as in xiii. 19 the sorrow and evil, the prediction of either, confirming the truth of all. In xiii. 19 the Lord had not spoken of it before; but from that, as it was just coming, He spoke of it. It did not affect the mission of Judas; but it was now needful to tell it them. It might otherwise have called in question His wisdom or knowledge. The disciples are apprised before, as due, as it were, to them, that their faith might not be shocked; as the blessing of privileged association. The world learned it in the accomplished fact.

But there was more than this in the order of the words. He had not much more to say to them, because possible intercourse with them was near a close. His was discipular intercourse; but the prince of *this world* was

coming, to have it (humanly) all his own way. But this close of His intercourse with them was not at all that the prince of this world had anything in Him; he had nothing; but it was that the world might know He thus shewed it in freely communicating His thoughts in it to them; that He loved the Father. This was the meaning of His death, and that as the Father gave Him commandment so He did.

He then arose, and went out; for this had passed before He left the place where they had been sitting. It would appear, from Matt. xxvi. 30, 31, that after singing a hymn they went to the Mount of Olives. The 31st verse in Matt. xxvi. evidently is not immediately consequent, for in 36 He comes to Gethsemane. 30 merely states generally what He did after the supper. Taking all from the hymn to Mount of Olives as one act, it appears to me that our Lord said these things while moving to go out, after the hymn; first as to Peter, and then before they actually went away to the Mount of Olives. This 14th chap., at the close of which He bids them arise to follow Him, doubtless slow to stir in the great scene which He had now opened to them of unlooked-for sorrow and woe, in which Judas had just now led the way, in this it was the Lord said, "Let not your heart be troubled," there are better things to come out of it all. On the way He entered on what was consequent on it all, the state of their position, and judgment of the Lord on it, and His final commending them to God in it so left, in the 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters, on which we now enter, these important chapters thus seen as the Lord's designation of their state.

—29, 30, 31. Perhaps "*but that*" follows as another

object besides their believing on Him, and "*hereafter*" to "*in Me*" (that is, *v.* 30), is in parenthesis. Consider then here what was done; with these objects He said these things; what the objects were; what He said, and the connection of what He said with these objects; and how His saying them tended to bringing these truths to bear on these ends.

There are three things in verses 19, 20 of John xiv.; that is, when we have received the Spirit, Christ is an *object*; we see Him when the world does not. He is our *life*; because He lives we shall live. We *know* (still having the Spirit) that He is *in the Father* (not here the Father in Him; it is Divine union, not even exaltation, and in proper Divinity), and we *in Him*, and He *in us*. The knowledge of our oneness with Him, as in Him, and He in us, and He in the Father. Then comes another thing: *manifestation* of Himself to us. Then the Holy Ghost teaches all things, all truth, and brings to remembrance what Jesus said when here; Divine truth, and the expression of life in Christ down here, what He was *in the world*.

Note, in John xiv., verse 3 gives Christ as going away and coming again, the position of the disciples as to His personal presence. Then comes what they ought to have known by the presence of the Lord Jesus as an abiding truth, whether He were on earth or in heaven; the revelation of the Father by the Son; that He was in the Father,

and the Father in Him; the coming of the Comforter involved; and the truth, not that the Father was in Him that was manifested on earth, but that He was in the Father (being on high), and that they were in Him, and He in them. The union and reciprocal indwelling was first of the Father and the Son; then (the Divine union of the Son with the Father being repeated, He being in the Father, which was Divine, and the natural point as their Head) the union, and reciprocal union, of the disciples and the Son was next stated, the knowledge of which depended on the presence of the Comforter, on His going away, which note.

Note, in John xiv. 20 it is not merely that the Divine side of union in Christ is noted because He was no longer on earth displaying the Father, but the whole depth of personal union in Him is brought out as now existing: He in the Divine side, in the Father, one with Him; we on the lower side, so to speak; He being Man, we in Him who is Son and one with the Father; and then He in us, to be manifested here below; though it ceases not there. What a chain! And there is light, I suppose, through this, thrown on the glory seen and displayed.

The xiv. John gives the Comforter as personal blessing and comfort, and being in Christ, and Christ in us. Hence, also, the coming of the Lord is to take us to *Himself*; so it is the Father sends Him in Christ's name, so as to place us as children to Himself. In xv., it is Christ

sends it, as glorified ; hence it is witness and power. With this is connected Acts ii., and the character of testimony. Hence, Christ is sitting at God's right hand till His enemies are made His footstool (xvi., as often observed, in His personal presence on earth, not His sending). All this connection is very interesting. Note how very carefully the sure, abiding place in, and living connection of the believer with, Christ is brought out (John xiv. 18-21) before the Lord speaks of the manifestation of Himself to the obedient ; which then has a most important place as to communion, though consequently being an abiding, and felt so when manifested. Yet obedience remains a groundwork in principle (see *v.* 15), for we are sanctified unto obedience ; but we have life to obey, not life for obedience ; and this life, and all its character (as the revelation of and being in Jesus, and Jesus in us) is absolutely and unqualifiedly put (18-21).

Note, in John xiv., the effect of the coming of the Comforter on Jesus's intercession. The Holy Ghost *abides* with us, and is *in* us. Christ thus comes to us as the One we have known and believed in (we live because He lives). We know that He is in the Father. We know that we are in Him, and that He is in us. All that is stated as our absolute condition. But then there is, through grace, a loving of Him, an *attention* to His mind, will, words ; so that we have His commandments, and keep them. He who so walks in love to Jesus will be loved of His Father. Jesus will love him, and will manifest Himself to him. Thus, by the abode of the

Comforter, walking in Jesus's commandments, He manifests Himself to us.

But further: if a man love Him, and keep His words (which is more intelligently intimate than His commandments, though the same principle; only one is more penetrated with His mind and spirit in keeping His words), the Father takes delight in such, and He and the Lord Jesus come, and make their abode with him. It is not the blessed fact simply that Jesus, though absent, manifests Himself to the soul, gives it the consciousness of His blessed presence and the love that brings Him there (that is, in him), but walking in His mind, in the spirit of heart, attention to every expression of His wish and mind. The abode of Father and Son gives a more full and peaceful consciousness of where we are; we are at home there; not yet in the Father's house with Jesus where He personally is, but in a Divine way they manifest their love, and stay with us, and make themselves, thus revealed, our home.

Chapter XV.

—1. "*I am.*" He speaks. Note "*true.*" Compare Isaiah v., and note "*I*"; and compare Isa. xlix. and lii., particularly latter parts.

—2. "*Not bearing fruit,*" the character of the branch. Also "*not.*" Not it bears *no* fruit. "*And every one bearing fruit,*" the fruit unto life eternal (see iv. 36).

—3. "*Already.*" Note, He says "*abide.*" Compare xiv. 24, and the instructive exposition of the 17th chapter particularly.

—1. A general statement of the great bases of truth; 5, an application as regards them.

—5. Note much, this is a promise from the author of it, who is able to give.

Note: the fruit, souls unto life eternal; the end, the Father's glory by Christ Jesus.

—6. Withering the consequence, for the sap of the Divine Spirit is withdrawn, which flows to believers by their vital union with their great Head. Note the contrast: a branch in Him fruitful, productive; cast out as unfruitful, then it withered itself (compare Matt. v. 13). And you may note the order, the seemingly inconsistent but in truth deeply instructive note, "*he is cast out*"; I mean the way it is stated, indicating that it is declarative of the state of the case. Compare Matt. vii. 15, etc., and to whom spoken, comparing v. 1., also xiii. 10, etc. and 1 Cor. ii., and then note chap. xiv. 29, 30, 31, and the note there.

The Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve, give grace to the least and unworthiest of His servants to minister to His glory in all the wisdom of the righteousness of the saints, gathering fruit unto His glory, which He has sown, and to obtain a place in the many mansions of His Father's house, through grace. Oh! for His appearing. Yet I know the love which causes Him

to bear long. Lord's Day, April 8/27. See all the 2nd Cor.

—7, 8. Note the order of the whole matter repeated as a foundation for "*what ye will.*" Then verse 8: "Herein is My Father glorified" seems in sense parenthetical, and "*that*" as the end or result of what is noted in verse 7, and thus will ye be, and be manifested, My disciples, so that ye may say, "Let a man so account of us," etc. I find 2 Corinthians particularly a great illustration of our Lord's mind in this place; and, note, it was His own preparation for service: I will shew him *hosa dei pathein* (how much he must suffer). But there are other things and a better purpose for His servants, as Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18; "and He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you," etc., and where is our present stay (see 1 Peter i. 5, 6, and from 8).

I think the Lord has shewn me His service; I mean simply preaching His gospel to every creature in the power of His grace and Spirit. I believe He is teaching me *hosa dei pathein*, and herein I humbly bless Him, presenting under the influence of His mercies my body a living sacrifice. But I look for ability in every thought simply as *abiding in Him*, and for direction simply to the will of God, proving it by the Spirit vouchsafed to us.

Having planted them in their personal associations, the Lord proceeds to shew them their general position. This introduces our Lord as the Head of a new system. "*I* am the true vine," the remnant of Israel but the stock of every branch. [That] the use of the word is corporate and official character, must be known to every reader, as

Psalm lxxx. 8; Isa. v. 1, 2, etc.; Jer. ii.; Ezek. xv.—xvii., etc. So Matt. xxi. 33. But our Lord closes all this in Himself: "I am the *true* vine," in Me the branches are to be. The Father is the husbandman. This is in many respects a blessed and very full instruction or revelation. Our Lord Himself thus (officially) becomes the immediate object of the Father's care. The care is coincident with such care as would be to it (Him). Hence He is the Vine, the perfectness and suitableness to Him is the standard care; the love, the perfect love, which exercises itself on it, but so as to preserve it in the character of holiness in its branches, which belonged to it. This is the truth, this is the office of the Father, in which He is bound to the Son, as He is, so to speak, bound to own the perfect righteousness of the people in the Son, or He would not be owning what must be owned, even Him, as righteous and just to forgive all their trespasses because of Him.

So here is the Father bound in this responsible office of love to take care of the branches according to the love, according to the character of the stock of the Vine in which they are grafted and are. How beautiful the committal of the office to the Father's care! What responsibility, I say, attached to the Father, being as regards the Son! It is indeed *His own* holiness. So we see in Heb. xii. 9, 10. This then is the love, this the constitution, this the standard love proposes and acts upon; left in the hands of the Father's love, Holy Father, or the care of Him as the Vine exercised on the branches viewed as connected with Him. Further, we see the sureness of the work of the vineyard. There may be many husband-

men, but the real husbandman of the vine is the Father. Thank God for such a word. It is "*I*," also "*My Father*." Accordingly in result it is not in the imbecility of reputed husbandmen workmen, but in the certainty of the Father's perfectness and love to Jesus.

"*Every branch*," clearly, I think, "*in Me*," the gist of the sentence rests on the connection in it: "*I am the true vine*," then "*Every branch in Me*." Next the point of question in the husbandman. Not bearing fruit, this the ground, not the work: it does not bear fruit; He takes it away. It was a branch in Christ apparently subject to the general influences of what flowed through the stock, the vine; but it proved not; it was taken away. Also note hence, as the vine, would lead us to suppose it is spoken corporately, not vitally; and every one bearing fruit, the fruit that is looked for from the tree. The tree is for fruit; the others did not bear fruit. The branch that bears fruit, to wit, that for which the vine was planted, it He purges. The fruit is the sign of vital union. On it the Father's, the husbandman's, care is spent, that it may bring forth more fruit. Deep comfort for them; standard for us practically!—"Already ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This is an important passage. Whenever there is vital union with the Lord, whenever there is any God-given faith, the first words of Christ received, so as to know and be identified with His Person, then there is cleansing: "Now are clean through the word."

There may be discipline for conformity, to subject old thoughts to new; but whenever in faith, in *vital* apprehension, the word has been received, we *are* pure. The

word also, note, is the standard. We have this practically. Care acts in respect of this. It is that which expresses, as regards us, what the Father's care acts in reference to; so that, if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord. He spoke: that was the power. The principle was there; they were sanctified. What He spoke was the standard: they were "clean," cleansed from; for His word bears nought of the world. There may be the purifying ministrations, husbandry of the Father, according to that to which we are united; that is, as to inconsistencies, with the emanencies of the old man, with the seed of eternal life planted by the word. And this is where sanctification works in the daily ordinary sense of the word. But we *are* clean through the word. This is also true in the relative sense of the word as exhibited xiii. 10, in that blessed passage of the Lord's girded priestly care: "Already ye are pure through the word." The subsequent operation is for correction, subdual, purging, relative to our purity; and this is the true understanding of the common notion of sanctification; not to enter into it more at large here.

The word is the standard. The Spirit sanctifies us, begetting us by the word. Conformity to this is the ministration of the Father's care in rooting out the power and bringing into subjection the old man, and this "*that more.*"

This is a very full subject, but we cannot enter into it here, only remarking that it is not only a sanctification of person but the principle of vitality of character from determining power which is here, so that we are "*clean,*" so as to bring fruit suitable to the vine, because the vital

principle, life from God, is in us, though there may be much to be subdued and purged, much to be brought into subjection which belonged to the old man, a vessel made to honour, fit for the Master's use, though this has different application. Compare with this passage 1 Peter i. 22-25. This purifying process of the Father's love is most important. All allowance of thoughts *not of the resurrection vine* (according to the knowledge especially vouchsafed) hinders fruit-bearing power; and *hasteners* shew signs of not being vitally branches. The purging is applied to the branches, not to the fruit, as arid tends directly to the grieving of the Spirit, defiling the channels of its operation, and arresting the progress of the glory of the Father in our service. That which follows is the remedy, and is practical; that is, it is not the fact of the necessary security of vital union but the exercise of the Spirit so united: "Abide in Me." It assumes connection: "Now . . . clean." It is not seek, apply to, or recur frequently, but "abide."

Now, this is a most important principle, the barrier to the inlet of evil, which chokes and defiles the channel of good from God. I do not say God may not overrule it, and is supreme to restore the soul. I know, know in humble dependence and blessing, He is. Still, I say, the portion of the Christian is *abide*, a most important and searching word of great power to meet Satan with: "Abide in Me"; for the strength is great when (practically) it is unmixed, and the channels (as it were) open with God. The streams are then filled with water, and coming fresh. It is not when coming washing the channels, and shewing even the mud it carries away (that

may be benefit), but flows clear and refreshing, so that there is refreshment within and around, and the mud and dirt in the channel ever so, prove to it so, earthy, is not contracted. Now, the simple precept here is, "Abide in Me, and I in you"; that is, as vitally united. This abiding in Christ is the order of His (thus) abiding in us. The abiding there is evidence, too, that we are vitally united. But here it is practically, and hence is the great principle, including most definitely, however, the latter force: It is in those who abide in Me that I abide. This is the verified "and I in you." "Abide in Me." It is in Christ.

Moreover, here is the emphasis, the point of association as the communion of all vital energy, the standard and communication of fulness, and thus all fulness is there. But as the branch bears nothing out of the vine, but withers itself, so we bear no fruit but as abiding in Christ, and this *practically* proportionately, for all the fulness is in Him. It is not merely the fact, but the exercise of the blessing. There is no fruit "*of itself*"; "*unless . . . abide in Me.*" But this, while it is vitally true, always is proportionately true daily. Then first the relationship between Him, as the Vine, and the Father. Then, as the conclusion of the practical result in this, being by His quickening word, "Abide in Me." Then the relation between Him and the branches, the abiding in Him, the intimate connection of which we have seen, with the question of the Father's purging, is therefore thus shewn to be the occasion of bearing *much* fruit; the force of which cannot be mistaken from what

we have said, if we have seen internal purging the way for external fruit-bearing, and abiding in Christ the very power of keeping evil as mentally a stranger practically; and hence the flow of healthful sap, no cankered branch, alas, "apart from Me."

But not only is this true as to one really in communion with Christ, but, however apparently planted, if one do not abide in Him, he is cast out as a branch not in the tree, withers, is dried up, there is no supply. They gather them, cast them into the fire, and burn them. All this parable brings in the end (in principle) in view, so as to shew [it], for this shall be in [the] close. While the individual source of much fruit-bearing strength is mentioned before, the Lord here seems to speak of what hung in a measure on their common position, as we know the force of agreement in this: "If *ye* abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done *to you*." There are two points referring both to their condition or state: "If ye abide in Me" (a Church declaration, as it were), "*and* My words abide in you," if you walk together in fellowship, and My words continue in their power in you, and so the common course of your conduct, *then* I will answer everything: "Ye shall ask what ye will," seek what power, to carry into effect such a fellowship with Me, "and it shall be done to you." For it was His Father's glory which was just His service, and that He sought, that they should bear much fruit for the Father's glory, as the evidence of His grace was in His children: "And ye shall be My disciples"; ye shall have this also of blessing to your souls, even being My disciples; ye shall

here shew yourselves really such; and in this, that it was My whole service to glorify the Father upon earth, and in doing this you will shew yourselves disciples of such a Master. Thus the double blessing.

Then another aspect of this question of the vine opened out: "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you." The Father's glory was in their fruitfulness, and they were His disciples. Well, as He in the world was loved of the Father, so they of Him. Then how had He continued in this love? Keeping His Father's commandments. If they kept His commandments they would abide in His love. *All* this shews the practical position of the vine under the care held to be over it; not here mystical, and sure in its results, but practical, and exhibited in its plain characters. The object of this was not requisition in judgment, but that His joy might remain in them, the joy of full communion with the Father, as in One that ever had the consciousness of pleasing Him. Christ's joy was to do His Father's will, and the perfect consciousness of His union with Him, and so doing His will.

Now, Christ's joy is our portion (Christ's joy was in His own blessedness of obedience, and His union with the Father), and not only to have the same joy, but to have His joy, and we do stand in Him as in the close: "Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord"; but here that it might *abide* in you, and so their joy might be full. He knew the blessedness of this earthly fellowship with the Father. In Him this was their portion, and so nothing would be wanting to their joy. But the manner of His joy was perfect obedience. He had loved them as the

Father loved Him. If they walked in His commandments, as He in His Father's, the abiding of love would be theirs. Here was a full joy for a full communion. But the assertion was that thus it would be full.

There was another point connected with their so standing incorporated on earth, so as to have the full blessing: loving one another. "This," says our Lord, singling it out, "this is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." That is, *self*-giving-up love, true love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Now, the Lord is not here speaking of His love to enemies, the manner of God's love to the world, but His love to His friends, the peculiar application of it to them as developed in the previous verses, and connected with their keeping His commandments, *universal* obedience, which is obedience and nothing else. If I (knowingly) do not obey in one thing, I obey in none, for they are my will. On universality of obedience blessing hangs, and must hang; otherwise God would be shewing blessing on what was not consistent with His character, which cannot be. There would be no blessing.

And we cannot but remark how obedience is insisted on here, the preliminary of blessedness, the order of abiding blessedness. The state of the matter is stated in verse 6. Persons in Him, or as in Him, are spoken of; then the practical order; then abiding in Him, and His words in us, is the source of all fruitfulness; then comes the love of it: "Abide in Me." But then I have loved: "abide in My love." "If ye keep My commandments," etc. In Christ, and His words the director of

our minds, we ask what we will. What lack, then, of fruit, if indeed *seeking the Father's glory*, as His disciples? Loved of Christ, and abiding in His love, Christ's joy abides in us, and our joy is full. This, while it hangs immediately on the last matter, yet flows from all that precedes in the chapter. Then in the order of it, while it flows from that, it is, "This is My commandment," the central point of this blessing, "that ye love one another, as I loved you." The name of servant (though indeed he is His servant, and nothing but His servant in willingness) no longer attaches to the disciple. He is not set in the place of a servant. He cannot be, for he is a son, a branch, one with Jesus the Vine. He is not so dealt with of the Lord; no longer because they were now viewed (as faithful, obedient servants) as planted in the Vine.

Obedience was the order, but He recognized them as friends. Then He makes known His mind. He tells them all things He had heard of His Father. What friendship! What friend to whom we could tell all things? I am that blessed friend. But the Lord tells all that, indeed known only to Him, and could be known only by Him, He tells it all to them. What friendship! How must the secret of the Father's love be in Him, and on us too; exercised in Him, that we should be the confidants of all that the Father makes known to Him! It was a great and astonishing endearment, and yet Lordship of friendship thus to communicate all His mind. And what was it but all the glory, not merely sent by Him, not in Jewish service to God, though by grace His servants, but

as planted in the character of the resurrection friends of Christ?

But, though friends, it does not put them in equality of circumstances, though of blessing; there is blessed sureness of grace in it: "Ye have not chosen Me." It was not their choice of Him that put them in this position, but that which, while it infinitely enhanced the blessing, gave it the sure settledness of Divine love. They could not have put themselves in the place of friends by their choice of Him. They had nothing to communicate to Him, unless their sorrows and their sins, when He had opened His heart in friendship to them. He had treated them as friends, having chosen them as such. In the sovereign certainty of His own choice they had all the blessing. There is always a certain superiority in friendship, lasting friendship. Here, as perfectly lasting, it was entire and perfect superiority, but it brings into the equality of love, and shews its greatness in bringing up into it; not conferred acts (that is God's love to us; though we have fellowship with the Father also), but bringing us into the apprehension of all His will, and Himself treating us on this ground. The sign of friendship is making known one's thoughts, which He does not to others; of perfect friendship, if such could be, unreserve. Christ's is perfect; it has no reserve; nothing which it need, nothing which it wishes, to keep back one point; and in that love [that] is not knit there is a holding back of the heart from another. But Jesus has none such. His love is perfect, and He makes us its sure objects; and the greater the superiority the greater the blessing. And here

is the amazing exaltation of the believer, the secret intimacy of all Christ's mind. Amazing love! How is the tone of mind exalted, however little we realize it; how, if we really in any sort fully did so!

So the necessity of God's intercourse with Abraham. He had made him the subject of His purposes, and was bound in His sovereign ways (in love) to him: "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do? seeing," etc.

And the same Lord here, the very same Lord in like faithfulness of communion, shall we not say greater majesty; for who is so great a God, who yet humbleth Himself to behold, and treats us [as] His friends, in full unmeasuredness of communion? For why should He keep back anything when He had not kept back Himself? And Abraham was called "the friend of God.'

And here note the difference of dispensation; *then* ordering his children after him, because it was successional; *here* personal and full unreserved obedience (of heart) to Jesus, so manifested in the flesh, and presenting the way of godliness, personal obedience and affiance to Him. Such is the position and order: friends, and friends to Jesus, and friends in obedience. Here is the only rightful place of friendship; and to this end here that we should go, chosen and set for this purpose, that we should go, and bear fruit, and that the fruit should remain; for it was of living power, so that thus whatever we should ask, being friends, the Father, in His name, He might give it them. They were thus spending their friendship in fruit-bearing to the Father's love to Jesus, and the purpose of Divine love in the accomplishment, by the grace of Jesus, of the Divine purpose in

union with and sent by Him, so that as friends they might ask what they would, and it should be given to them; a sure sign of friendship and unity of spirit. To deny anything in the way of friendship therefore in obedience, as to reserve anything, is to deny the bindingness of love. Still it is, "I have chosen." Being thus knit to Jesus, and bearing the fruit, they were the objects of the Father's necessary care and love. And their being in the way of His purpose (through this grace and the choosing of Jesus) knit up with His glory, He must as it were give them in boundness to Jesus, whatsoever they ask. This is the result of the commandments.

The voluntary though obedient love of Christ was shewn even unto death, and so our portion; He towards the Father, we to Him. We should lay down our lives for the brethren. But it is in obedience His perfect love above and beneath, and shewn beneath, was shewn in death, shewn in love to those loved of the Father as of Himself. So we to those loved of Him, as in some sort by His Spirit of ourselves. But the track of this was in long previous patience of perfect love, while that was the Father's commandment, exercising His patience, but knitting His love to them, with Him in His tribulations. He could not gallantly shew out His love at a moment's effort. It was far more perfect than this; but having patiently "loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." The Father had loved Him, yet not so but that He should pass through the appointed trial, wherein and whereby in His own case it was all drawn out. So we; and the path of this is the path of His commandments, the unwearied patience

of God's will. He kept His commandments, and abode in His love.

And thus the way of Christ's commandments is the present exercise of that fruit-bearing love in which, abiding in it, we find ourselves, and have grace to go through, by His power in us, His service to the brethren to the end. It is the way of that love, where we find the grace that carries us on. And observe the order. Jesus loves us as the Father loved Him; says, "Abide," and "the way"; "If ye keep My commandments, as I My Father's." Well, then, it is not a mere titual legal precept, but "he that hath My commandments." Well, then, this is matter of the spiritual knowledge of love. Then these things are for our joy, and exercised in, and shewn in, loving one another as He loved us; that is, to death as His friends. But this was in the Father's will in a course of obedience. Well, He still keeps at the measure of His love here. Whatsoever He hath heard of His Father He hath made known unto us; friends, if we do what He commands; treated as friends in the communication of all His Father has told; thus set in the path of glory, and thereon the other fruit of blessing in it, if identified friendship with Himself, in His name, as placed in the place of labour and fruit; whatsoever we ask to have done of the same Father, our Father, and His Father, and He so give it. Blessed truth!

All this was for their knitting up together as one body, as is manifest from the very position it puts us in, as common partakers of the love of Him as the Father loved Him, set in this common bond. True, the love

might be mutually weak when there was feebleness or failure and indeterminateness in keeping the track of love and fellowship, the commandments. But He stated it for them now. This was the way of it, the force, the order of it. So it was with Him as with His people. He had chosen them for this, that they might be as one in the way of it. Their identity with Jesus was the great secret of it, loved of Him as He of the Father. If the world therefore hated them it was no marvel; it hated Him before. If brought into His blessing no marvel if sharing the enmity of what hated the source of it. But it was the secret of love. The secret of love therefore was proved by it: *they were not of the world.* If they were, the world would have loved it. It had its necessity of love. But they were not, and this broke all their joys, a sad witness in the midst of them. But there was more in it than this: "But I have chosen you out of the world." This, the secret consciousness of this, what the devil was conscious of, of this the leader of the world: "Therefore the world hateth you." No marvel ground of hatred be whose they were. Christ, besides His glory, was God's Elect, and therefore also the world hated *Him.* This they had to keep in mind; for it would prey otherwise upon their faith. The servant was not greater than his Lord, if identified with Him; of this, their joyous portion, they would have His portion, identified there where His service was. "If Me," "you," "if My word," "yours." Blessed identity! (Lord, make it utterly so). And the reason runs to the source: they will do it for My name's sake. So it has its glory. And this to the fullest point of question:

"Because they have not known," what? "Him that sent Me."

What follows is a deduction that it does involve them in the whole question. They cannot reject Him or hate Him without hating His Father. They do not know, says the Lord, Him that sent Me. But then is this all? Nay, but Jesus had manifested Him, had spoken unto them: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin." His word had been ample to judge all their acts. They had no excuse, for He, the Truth, had spoken. This led His sheep. But he that hated Him hated His Father also. It was true as the Son. But, then, how manifested? Even in doing works which none other man did. The Father's glory and hand were here shewn forth, He the Son in unity with Him: "Therefore if I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father," for the Father's glory was shewn in the works, the Son's working, the voice and the works. But however the voice led, and they inexcusable, yet more might have been done. If no cloak, there might have been, it might be supposed, power to bring out. But what none other man did had been done among them, and the Father's glory shewn. They *saw* and hated both Him and His Father. It was no longer merely the Son's voice, with the Father yet behind, but the works witnessing the Father added. They *saw* and hated. They were in utter alienation from seen blessedness of all the revelation in Him of the Father and the Son.

And why was their evil present offence? The love was gratuitous, and here was the desperate evil: "They hated Me," the predicted state, gratuitously, freely, "without a cause." Oh, what a word, a sad and awful, perplexing word, for man, as humbling us as to man's evil nature and corruption! They hated the blessed perfectness of Jesus, freely and gratuitously, "without a cause," as the portion of the saints was "without a cause," so as surely there was no cause of hatred in Jesus. They hated the Lord freely, the uncaused movements of positive evil, free evil; a remarkable word, the reward alike in both a sad and predicted state: "They hated Me without a cause," and their reward accordingly. Thus was Christ rejected; thus would the world reject them. But the Father had not. When the Comforter, He who should take their part, was come, whom Christ sent from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who comes forth from the Father, He would bear witness. All this is the answer of testimony to what was rejected, the Son, and the Father in Him, and so they. To them the Spirit was sent, the Witness, the Comforter, "whom I will send to you."

The connection was between Christ and them; hence the appositeness of this. As the Comforter He came from Him, but from the Father, or the testimony asserted by Him would not have been complete thus as to union and testimony from the Lord to them. As the Spirit of truth He cometh forth from the Father; for the witness is to Christ, the Father's witness, the witness of truth from Him, bound to vindicate His glory by reason of His humiliation. The testimony was perfect from the

Father. He would witness to Christ to them and to the world, in a just way with them in witness sent of Christ from the Father, when He was to the world, who had not received Him, the sure and certain witness of His glory. They also should bear witness, for they had been with Him from the beginning.

There was to be the double witness of the exalted glory in oneness with the Father which the Spirit sent of Him and from the Father would testify of, which indeed was the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and of the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, known in all the human life in which both the exercise, the perfectness, the human spotlessness, and the graciousness were brought all out to human manifestation and apprehension, that which, while it was the common spiritual food of every believer, yet in its order is, the one the glory, the other Jewish perfectness; so the witness is double. The Spirit, He alone witnesses from above, and the disciples the proper witness from below; that is, upon earth, the actual witnesses as with Him "from the beginning." We may trace this (thereby marked to be Jewish in character) [in] Acts i. 21, 22, and xv. 28, where the former is introduced. The expression is remarkable, and strongly indicative of the latter and its connection. But it is sufficient to have alluded to this here.

John xv. 4. No fruit without Christ, not abiding in Him. 5, Abiding in Him, *much* fruit. 7, Asking what we will, if His words *alsc* abide in us. 8, closes this

part. 9, Divine love. By this joy full. 12, Brotherly love, perfect through grace. 16, The Father, if true to Christ's actings, must minister all needed power to us, to make things good. 17, Commanded for mutual love; then the world.

In John xiv. we have Christ taking His relationship with the Father. First displaying them on earth: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and then (as Man) as Intercessor on high obtains the Spirit, whom the Father sends. Still He is Son of God, a Divine Person: He comes, manifests Himself, and the Father and He come and make their abode. And He puts them in His own place on earth, and they ought to rejoice in His going up to His in heaven. It is (as ever in John) the Son, but the Son as Man; but here in relationship with His Father; the Son, who is a Man on earth and in heaven. In xv. it is His own place on earth and in heaven; His official, not personal place. On earth He is the True Vine. Israel was not. His followers are in relationship with Himself in the place He is in. So, gone on high, He sends the Comforter, who testifies of Him, so exalted. He is among His disciples or exalted in xv.; in relationship with His Father in xiv. and puts us so; Himself being Son withal, by whom we are so.

Note, in John xv. 22, fol., it is not sins, but sin. Sins, no doubt, they had; but they were not held definitively in the state of sin, had they not rejected Jesus. If man

was recoverable, administrative forgiveness would have sufficed (not that the thing was, or really could be, but supposed). But their state before God was a condition of absolute sin, uncloaked hatred, alas! when there was adequate manifestation of Him, of the Son and of the Father. It is a terrible position.

In John xv., we cannot understand the last verses without taking in the aim of the whole chapter. Israel was not the true vine, but had been planted as God's vine under its responsibility. Christ was the True Vine. But how did Israel lose this place (which it had externally) of God's vine? By breaking the Law? No. Christ had come, and revealed the Father perfectly. The True Vine was Christ; the Father the husbandman. Israel was cast out, and rejected (as, in Isaiah xlix., Christ, who had laboured in vain *in Israel, replaces* Israel as the servant), not owned as the vine. Christ (the Son) was the Vine; His disciples the branches. It was the presenting of Christ the Son, revealing the Father in word and work, which brought them under this sin and rejection. The old apparent relationship would have continued, and the sin which involved their rejection not been committed, if Christ had not come, and revealed the Father by word and work. Patience could and would support the breach of the Law. The coming of Christ proved it. The reception of Christ (the Son revealing the Father) would have superseded the breach of the Law. Israel would have been proved not completely evil, man's state

remediable, and governmental pardon sufficient and granted. But the revelation of the Father in the Son brought out the full hatred of man's heart against God. There was no cloak or excuse for their sin. They are set aside, and the True Vine brought out to light.

John xv. The force of "I *am* the true vine," and the expression "vine," which does not entirely go out of His Jewish or present association, though taking a new heading of it, and so passing *consequently* into the Church filled with the Spirit; hence obedience and abiding are pressed; and that as before the Holy Ghost is spoken of as One who would come; but before that the Lord says, "I am the true vine."

The connection of the True Vine with what was Jewish is familiar in Scripture. The lxxx. Psalm may be referred to as the type of this expression. But Israel had failed; it was "the degenerate plant of a strange vine to Jehovah." Christ took the place of this, having left Israel, but Himself the true stock of it; not a Messenger, or Messiah, come to it in that character. He had been rejected, and revealed therein in the previous chapter, the Father; and Himself as the Truth, and object of *faith*; and the Comforter as the power of known communion with them. Here it was what He came as, but what took the place of what He came to, and was the truth of which it was the form in responsibility. He was not now seeking fruit of the vine. It was degenerate and strange. He only was the True Vine to God. The dis-

ciples were the branches, were clean, through the word spoken. It was not branches recognized as such because there. That was the Jewish principle, and so after the flesh. But branches not bearing fruit would be taken away by the Father, to whom Jesus was the True Vine.

Jehovah did not do so with Israel. There was no individualized question of men fruit-bearing (though individuals were cut off for unrighteousness, or even ceremonial evil committed or unrepaired). Branches there might bear no fruit, and remain; but branches in *Me*, in the True Vine, in Christ, could not. The Father exercised pruning and discipline, and He taketh away fruitless branches. It is the character of the dispensation in the Father's dealings. The power of unity by the Spirit, in the power of the Spirit, was not yet set forth, but the principle of the Father's dealings with branches in Him the True Vine was; which True Vine (the whole scene with Israel being finished) He could now state He was. The Father had respect to fruit-bearing now; fruit-bearing suited to the True Vine; and purged fruit-bearing branches, that they might bring forth more. This was still not yet exactly the power and energy of the Spirit, though by it; He also might work in ministration; but the word Jesus *had spoken* they were clean by, *already clean*. This then was said as to Christ and the word before the promise of the Comforter was accomplished, which was the power of unity in His absence. The professed association of Israel with Him formed a vine and its branches, so far as any did so profess. Thus it was true of the disciples.

But there was another truth as to them: they were *clean* by the word.

They were to "abide" in Him. If one of them set up for himself to lead, he could not bear fruit. It was not only the truth they were to testify of, but they must have Him as the source of strength and competency also. Without Him they could do nothing. They must be united as well as, and to, be witnesses, to bear fruit; for sap and life was only in Him. The Holy Ghost might be the power of this, as it was of knowledge and communion with the Father and the Son; but as the Father and the Son were the objects presented in the beginning of that chapter, and afterwards the Comforter as the power, so here. It is presented as the True Vine. The power of the Comforter in this properly was reserved for the development of the Gentile admission as one body, a mystery not revealed till the Spirit came. His power as a witness is spoken of afterwards in these chapters. That might be developed in the unity of the body, but was an independent and, indeed, antecedent subject. They *were* clean, and they were to abide; so He tells them.

He then introduces further precision of application to themselves, but (that being established) not with the same contrast with the Israelitish formal vine. It is not "I am the *true* vine," but "I am the vine; ye are the branches": you are mere branches; "apart from Me ye can do nothing." Though the source of blessing, Jesus had not yet left the place of subjection, as He received all the Father brought to Him; come to do the will of Him that sent Him (though, equally true, He quickened

whom He would). So He was a vine, and they branches; and *the Father* took away, and purged, according to the wisdom in which *He* judged of fruit. Christ is not entirely gone out of this character, though passing, as it were, into the source of blessing. Hence, note also, the vine is planted on earth, whereas the Church is set in heaven. So fruit-bearing is on earth, and in every aspect the vine is on *earth*.

Note, in John xv. to *v.* 8, it looks upward in dependence; from *v.* 9 downwards in love. In 16, as Christ had chosen them to go and bring forth fruit; and of course His choice was owned, and the Father would do all for Him (and indeed was Himself glorified by it, *v.* 8), they, in pursuit of their mission, had only to ask the Father in His name, and He would do whatever they asked. This, in our little measure, so far as we are sent, is a very great comfort. Note also the difference between 2, 6 and 4, 7. In the last two the question is of fruit-bearing and help, not of cutting off. 2, 6, it is taking away, casting off. But query further: is not the passage, in its first words, much more Jewish than we have at all yet supposed? I mean in this, Israel (as often observed) was, though a vine, not the *true* vine. Messiah, called as Jehovah's Son out of Egypt, was the True Vine. But, as first so looked at, are not all professing Jews then in the land at first sight branches in Him; His Father, whom they called their God, the husbandman? Those now therefore who did not bear fruit (not merely such as Judas), all who did not bring fruit (which they could not do un-

less deriving living grace from Christ) were cut off. The Jews have been so. But there were some (the eleven, and others) who did. These Jehovah, *His Father*, *purged*.

Now, this, as to them, had already taken place by His own word to them. They were not therefore to be thus cut off. But then another exhortation comes to abide in Him, so as to bear fruit. Leaving at any time deprived a man of any possible fruit-bearing. In 5 a new paragraph begins, where the disciples *alone* are taken up as branches; and thence professing disciples then (and afterwards) on the earth come on the scene. 5 gives the way, and exclusive way, of blessing; 7 the extent of it. From 4 on we easily see abiding is the question. 1 and 2 is what was. 3 makes the distinction of the disciples. 1, 2, we have Israel. 3, 4, now they are clean the need of abiding not to be in the case of 2.

If any exclude open adversaries as already distinct from branches, and reckon only those who in a public way (the world had gone after Him, followed Him), I have nothing to say. It does not, to my mind, alter the case: but I add that the Epistle seems to me to go greatly on this ground; only, of course, further on in the history; only abiding was the grand question; but even then not of neglecting the great salvation preached by the Lord; though, on the other hand, the heavenly character of the calling is pressed, and they were then pressed to go outside the camp, bearing Christ's reproach. Still, as to the past position (now breaking up) they are told that Jesus suffered without the gate, that He might sanctify *the people* with His own blood. Adversaries, of

course, have for themselves taken an outside position; but the non-abiders seem then to get into it. On the whole, the path is dependence and obedience; the comfort, full supply, and perfect love. The position of the Lord in the seven churches is not the exercise of judgment; but He stands in a judicial position, and takes judicial cognizance of them.

It is remarkable, the severity with which He speaks, compared with His patient and forgiving grace to individual saints; because it is the professing Church, and a public witness to be given to the glory of God. Losing first love is enough to warn of excision, in spite of labour and toil and patience. But there is a great principle in this. It was departure, the great principle of ruin in the creature. Indeed, in Laodicea this is the ground of judgment. "Kept My word" is a great thing at the close; for "he that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me." The Judge, too, is remarkably characterized. Not Jehovah and the Son of Man, but the Divine Person of the Son of Man. So He judges, and from the beginning I rather think *somewhat* is right, ii. 4; compare 14-20; for there "*oti*" seems better translated "*because*."

Chapter XVI.

Thus the Lord had declared their general position in His absence, declared it that as a time of trial they might not be disturbed when it arose. The friendship to Him He had stated, and His joy to be in them, and their joy full. The hatred of the world He had stated, but the reason of it also. He was now more precise, for He had more to communicate. They would be rejected by their religious companions and ecclesiastical authority. This was more definite trial than viewing it as the general hatred of the world, which knew not the Father nor Him. The Church (that is, as Jews) were to hate them and reject them. Their excommunication was as a matter of course. But being ignorant of the Father and the Son they would think they were doing God service in killing them. They were not to be surprised at them. They had been told before, and were to be mindful of them as confirming the truth of their expectations. They were to expect no relentings, for murderers by conscience are surely unrelenting, as it is the power of Satan; not inconvertible, as we know in Paul.

The Lord having been with them had not told them these things. It was not concealment, but they were not so while His power was present. Whatever He might suffer He exercised control over Satan; but now that it was matter of faith, His glory, He being rejected, the principle (of sufferance to death) was brought in, and they

must expect it in that sense (that is, by present power) unsustained. He had been with them, and there had been occasion for none of these cautions or warnings. He was there to guide, help and secure; but now He went His way to Him that sent Him, and none's eyes were carried forward, or to where He was going. So did selfishness of sorrow, feeling, prevail. But they were filled with the fact of their own desolation. Yet it was not rest to Himself He sought, though it were so. He had made Himself the Servant of His Father's will and their blessing. But He told them the truth. It might seem a humiliating thing to all He had been to them. It was a justifiable thing to them. He should go away. Strange, yet brilliant and blessed mercy! What things has our Lord provided for us, even the presence of the Holy Ghost, His witness! If He went, He would send Him to them. The presence of the Holy Ghost, then, was the greater. The thing which made up was greater than the loss of Jesus, that being which He revealed and declared, but His presence in the consequent blessings was a greater thing. The world was to be against them, and the Church was to be against them; but this was their great link with every blessing, the great distinctive witness of God's portion, their portion. Therefore in the opposition of all the inheritance as contrasted with the world (on God's part), not the temple made with hands, but the presence of God by the Spirit, their portion the conscious witnesses of the Divine power. That was gone as a thing made with hands; and they had that which was abiding in the power of its revelation (compare 2 Cor. iii. 11, and Acts vii.).

The distinction of their place here is very important. The world rejected, but the Spirit "will convict," and though made "out of the synagogues," the Spirit with them witnessed the glory. This latter, and all the fulness of moral truth connected with it, God's glory being always consistent with His character, they could not be told now, because death had not come in, and they had not that Spirit of life in which they could understand both the glory and the death. For there are two distinct things, the testimony of the Spirit to the world, and its taking and shewing things to them of the fulness of Christ, as the Spirit of truth. The latter they were for the most part incapable of now. The promise is explicit and precise. He, the Comforter, the Advocate, shall convince it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. You will observe it is the marked presence of a Person who does these things: "Having come He will convict."

If we are put out of the synagogue, note, we become temples. Were it not, difficult indeed would be our lot.

He, coming, shall convince the world about sin, etc. This is His office. He does not speak of effectual result, though of course there was such. About sin, indeed, in this, that "they believe not on Me." It was not merely sinfulness or transgressions; both might have been charged naturally, and by the Law; but their very state, their whole state with God. The former, sunk under the bright coming of Jesus from God the Father, were forgotten in this abounding act of love. This proved the manner of God's dealings with the world; not then, that is, in the presenting of Jesus to it. God was in Christ

reconciling, and not imputing. They saw no beauty in it or Him. He was despised and rejected of men. They esteemed Him not. Thus was the accumulated evidence of their utter and desperate alienation of mind brought out. They were sin, and nothing else; for where all beauty was they saw none; where God was manifested in the flesh He was not known; when He came to His own in the way of personal grace they received Him not, but hated and rejected Him. This is the great argument, the argument of sin to the world. Here is the ground on which it stands before God, howsoever besides it may have transgressed, as indeed they had. They believe not on Jesus; that is the whole matter, the summing up of all, the concentrating and exhibition of all; enmity against God most displayed in grace; enmity to death; the slave of Satan. Here sin was triumphant, most utterly so, as far as it could be in its weakness and destructiveness in the death of Christ the Lord. But not believing was the same thing as to position.

Then of "righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more." To the world there would be no evidence of righteousness in the death of Christ, but the contrary; nor even outwardly in the act of vicarious suffering. To the world it was the triumph of unrighteousness. And not only so, but the *apparent* utter dereliction or failure of God in upholding that which was righteous. The righteous One was put down by man apparently, and deserted by God. His own word was, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Indeed, the full tide of the effects of unrighteousness, judicial and moral, all set in and flowed into and over the soul of Christ. If He

bowed in His love under the triumphant effects of moral unrighteousness, led of the great head of it, Satan, his hour and the power of darkness, He had to bow at the same moment, instead of finding vindication under the judgment, as the unrighteous One (though righteous), at the hands of His God. It was the full resulting exhibition of the power (but weakness) of unrighteousness in the hands of Satan, left (in order to the full result of Divine glory and vindication) to come to its height of evil; the utter rejection of sin by the Father, even when laid on the Person of His beloved Son, where if anywhere it might be passed by. In a word, while the cross established in the Person of Jesus the most perfect righteousness on the part of Man, as may be seen in the minutest contrast with the first Adam, and the most perfect vindication of God in the same act, as may be also seen in it, there appeared the most total failure to own or vindicate this; it seemed left helplessly in the power of unrighteousness. But indeed vindication *there* would neither have been it, or given it its force; nor would it have given it its righteous reward. Righteousness to death was needed, and righteousness under apparent rejection, to shew the full force of its reception at the right hand of God, the right hand of the Father, the Majesty on high itself.

It was God's righteousness illustrated in the Son that was to be shewn; and though in Man, in whom it was to be wrought out, it had no adequate witness of glory but at the right hand of the Father. And hence as to this the intrinsic importance of the position of Christ to the Church before His return: "I go to My Father,

and ye see Me no more." He was alone in this, *alone* in righteousness. Even His disciples forsook Him, and fled; or denied Him, and stood afar off. None even outwardly stood by Him, or were able to drink the cup; that is, then, or be so baptized. And though the coming of the Lord will be the time of His joy in being glorified in His saints, their being glorified with Him, yet the reward of righteousness was in His acceptance of the Father, His glory vindicated and adequately shewn, and only so in His sitting down on the Father's throne. This is a blessed and glorious thought. He, speaking of Him as a Man, owned and vindicated the Father throughout, and sits down accordingly on His throne in righteousness. And righteousness in its fullest, highest sense was here, as between the Father and the Son; that is, the suffering Jesus shewn, but shewn in the glory of God. See xiii. 31, 32.

The world is convinced of righteousness and its perfection, then, in the suffering Jesus being at the right hand of the Father, the Majesty on high, in righteousness. Vindicatingly and effectually He was alone. Then He, and none else, sits, and righteousness is demonstrated. It would not have been done so here, though as to actual righteousness He might have been at any time vindicated; but righteousness in man would not have been wrought out in its fulness, nor God glorified in it, and love and Divine counsel so ordered for His glory. Left in the world to be seen of those (however gracious to them) who rejected or forsook Him would not have been righteousness. And the present glory of the Saviour is the full, personal witness

of righteousness. Though alone in it in death it morally extended to the Father. Here it was effected, declared, and known; of course, only to those to whom, by the Spirit sent down, it was witnessed; though it was the testimony in love, declared to the world which had rejected Him, the unrighteous world. Besides, there was a righteousness in death which was more than intrinsic; it was vindicating God, and therefore God vindicated it. It was not merely that which was just (in Him as Man), but that which fully justified God in character; and therefore God justified it, when it was done, at His right hand. As regarded Man, the righteous One was rejected, and therefore they saw Him no more. But the righteousness, all that God was, was vindicated, was brought into light from evil, and He went to the throne due to Him, accepted of the Father, and it due to Him.

I do not speak of the continual tendency towards it, or the trial through which the Lord passed anticipative of His death, but abstractedly. The Lord's righteousness upon earth was natural righteousness, perfect consistency with what was required of God, Adam righteousness. Therefore this extended not to God. Therefore He says, "Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is God." As He says, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." So in the 16th Psalm; the Lord expressing His portion as Man in His mind or spirit, doubtless, when He said, "Why callest," etc.: "Thou hast said unto Jehovah" (He here owned this place before the Father), "Thou art My Lord; My goodness reacheth not to Thee." This was the humiliation of Jesus. Now this righteousness seemed altogether lost;

for He was not only despised and rejected of men, but so as to be esteemed smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted; and no witness to man of the contrary. But the ascension to the throne of the Father shewed a goodness that extended to God there. For indeed God had been perfectly glorified in the death of Him, the Lord, the Head of a righteousness which had its place there, as Adam was naturally *ex*cluded from God; He re-admitted, having suffered for sin, to the Father's throne. And here was the extent and effect of righteousness, and here our place and acceptance with God, whatever our actual condition. And this is the abounding glory of the gospel. He was seen no more. The world was righteously deprived of Him. Righteousness then, note, was evinced, not in seeing the Lord in the glory (that is the glory of grace), but in Jesus at the right hand of the Father, and seen no more. It is a present portion, and equivalent to the throne of God. But enough thus far.

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The same way judgment is known in principle as passed, because the head of the system is judged. The Prince of believers is on high; seen no more even by them; and their righteousness therefore was not merely associated with Him on earth in such order of righteousness (as indeed they could not), but by faith, as not seen, with Him whose righteousness reached to God's throne, to the acceptance of the Father. "Therefore doth My Father love," as God was glorified. The prince of the world, so proved previously, was judged; and so judgment was proved; this world as such judged in its head. Thus it was convicted of judgment, sin, and righteousness; set

on quite a new ground, even the rejection of Jesus on earth; His reception to previous glory with the Father in heaven in His throne; but herein the setting aside the whole system, proved to be under the power of the apostate enemy of righteousness, of God, by the death of Christ; judged in the rejection of Jesus, in His resurrection proving who was rejected. Hence the reception of Jesus graciously when He reappears is not that righteousness of faith which has its place and portion with the Father in the Father's house; for it does not know Jesus there. But this is the Church's righteousness and portion, and it has fellowship therefore with the Father and with His Son Jesus by virtue of the Spirit so revealing the Lord; a greater portion, a portion of faith; therefore not rest, but which reaches to the righteousness of the Father's throne.

Then as to the conflict as to the world in which they are conversant, though there is no judgment now, wrong judgment proceedeth, and though in the world while Jesus was at the right hand of the Father, and hence though knowing righteousness in conflict, yet kept steady and in comfort, knowing by proof of the Spirit sent down, the prince of this world, even the enemy to be judged. It was "this world" which hated them, but the prince of it *was* judged. It all hinged round the great truth of the absolute rejection of Jesus by a led world, Jew and Gentile; known, and the reception to the Father known, by the sending down of the Spirit. Thus far was testimony to the world, and so was expressed now as subjects of it; but the glory of risen and glorified hopes nothing but the Spirit could understand. They could not bear

what followed upon death now, and all the mystery of the wisdom which was to be opened in His rejection, exaltation, and the hope of the Church in that, and position of the Jew. It could not consort with present thoughts and hopes of faith.

The gift of the Spirit would open it out, and shew the bearing on the world, in love gathering into the glory. But when the Spirit was come He would guide them into all truth. This was given as to disciples, not to the world. Here He is primarily called the Spirit of truth. This is one great official character that it has; the same Spirit, but having this farther office towards them, to guide them into all the truth; for He shall not speak from Himself, as conversant on the earth, when He is spoken of officially as the Son there, and therefore of present things; but what He shall hear; that is, as communicating the counsels of God. He shall communicate, the counsels as from on high from God. Of the Son it was said, because of fellowship, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," as one with the Father, the Son of Man "who is in heaven"; but He, because of revelation as from them in whom the fellowship was, "that which He shall hear;" "and He shall shew you things," or the things, "to come." All the truth seems contrasted with the conviction of the world upon the elementary principles of what had taken place in Christ; that is, evinced in that. But He should guide into all truth, that is, the disciples. What He heard: this was His revelation from heaven. He spoke them (that is, on earth). What He should hear: it was open revelation; it was not as Christ, measuring ability,

but "whatever He shall hear"; for He does it ministerially, Christ the Lord ministering suitable revelations; as heard He shall speak. Compare Matt. x. 27, and with equal force. So [Matt.] x. 19, 20. "Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." It was a measured and specific communication, though no measure in Him acting ministerially. What He heard He spake, and consequently the disciples. It was not discretion, like Christ. He came to make a revelation, and consequently to declare what He was given to reveal, as so ministerial, to the perfectness and perfect counsels of God, in gift. The Spirit is supreme in this; that is, in revelation ministerial. So accordingly we, as by command; our silence but little of the Spirit.

But there is another difference. There is no limit now, all the glory being Christ's, but the measure of His communication, for He is the word (of life), treasured in the Scripture. Actually He communicates it by the Spirit, according to the counsels of God and ministration of the Father. Whatever is to be said for the profit of the Church He speaks from that source, revelation chiefly also, in one sense, but knowledge, doctrine, or reproof may take its place; but properly revelation of the mind of God from above, as *now between us and Him*. And besides these He shall declare to you things to come. This may be by speaking, but not, I think, necessary.

But besides revealing the matter of our present association with God, and testifying to it as from God, that is, "whatsoever He shall hear," He will also shew us the coming things. Now this may be the whole extent further of the things to come, the scene before us; but it

is not *ta mellonta* simply; that is, the things of the dispensation to come as contrasted with the present, the *ta enestōta*; but, though including them, not as a distinct dispensation, but the things coming as contrasted with the present associations with God. And this is the special portion of the Church of God. He speaks simply present things. He declares to you "things to come," though all this be in the Church. So Abraham: "Shall I hide?" So the disciples: "I have called you friends." And here I think we are led into the word prophecy, the latter being the specific character of it, but the whole coming as used under this. I say, underneath this, for prophecy is but the utterance and expression of the portion of the Church, and of God's mind in it; and this explains to one this word generally.

The general office of the Spirit is then declared, in which all these are comprehended, but the general object specifically stated: "He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." In revelation of, in declaring, things to come, He glorifies Christ, for He is declaring Christ's things. But in this there is no separation from the Father, for it is as "all things that the Father hath" are Christ's. He says "receive of Mine"; and this unity of possession, as in all else, is the very blessing of the Church; for were it not so (as indeed it must) in receiving or hearing of Christ's things it might not have known or received the Father's; but in knowing, spiritually knowing, His we know the Father's. So we shall know the Father's glory in the day when He appears, for He shall appear in it. This then is the great subject of the Spirit's operation; it glori-

fies Christ; it is "of Mine," "whatsoever things are Mine," as between Him and the Father; but we know "in detail," though the Spirit searcheth all things, and shall not till that day know all, that is, collectaneously as known, but in part, and so prophesy in part "of Mine," and the Spirit communicatively and ministerially receives (which note) and declares. He searches all.

Having stated the circumstances connected with the blessing of the Comforter, He proceeds to speak of what concerns His own Person. He was not going to die, so to speak, but to go to His Father; and because He was going to His Father, He was about to be unseen by them soon. Yet "a little while, and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me." This of the disciples too. This was true in a partial, momentary illustration on His resurrection; for though He had not gone to the Father He was there because He went to Him, being raised by the glory of the Father, and it shewed the real, personal seeing of Him. It would be but the visibility of Christ was reinstated in the resurrection, and at any moment He might appear; and His appearance and appearableness had its date from then (which note). He was not dead and buried merely, but *He* went to the Father, and therefore they saw Him no more; and in a little while they would see Him again, being risen again. He was that Son of Man, that risen security of the mercies of David, the Second Adam who was to appear. His actual manifestation was the form and pledge of this, and therefore verified their hopes. They were begotten again to a living hope, though the great

result and reality to be brought out of blessing was the day in which, after a little while, He should appear to their joy.

Thus then, as regards the Remnant, it had accomplishment, or rather exhibition, in His being seen after His resurrection. For this was not to all the people, but [only to] witnesses chosen before of God. As to them, their sorrow was turned into joy; they knew and saw the risen Jesus. As regards the nation, and the results, the Man that was to be born into the world was to be when the world to come should be, or introduce it however. And here we get the force, I think, of the birth of the Man Child. He was born to the hope and knowledge of the Church and Remnant when Jesus was raised, and appeared to the Jewish believing few; visibly so born. But as regards the nation He would not be till the day of His appearing; as they say in that day, beholding His glory, "Unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given." And so as regards the world subordinately, and as they were in sorrow now; and then at the resurrection of Jesus their sorrow was turned into joy. So of the people in that day, they will be in the "tribulation," but forget the trouble for the abundance of joy when the Son is given to them. They recognize that the Child was born to them, coming in by faith, even as the Gentiles did, who, seeing the glory and the Lord, had to be taught faith: "I am Jesus," that One that was slain. But the whole was the personal presence of Jesus to the Jewish body, now known only in a Remnant, for they had rejected Him; and then indeed a Remnant not made a nation, they had sorrow in knowing His rejection by the nation.

So in the latter day the sorrow of faith as to who He was. But He would see them again, and their heart would rejoice, and none be able to take it away, for Jesus gave it.

The Church was built upon this joy, for it was by those who had seen Jesus. It was taught to wait for it; for that on which it was so founded was not seen. Hence its ambiguous position. We have the joy of known and seen resurrection, and glory; now the grief of an absent Saviour and the joy of hope of seeing Him; yea, and being with Him in the glory; then its joy fulfilled.

"And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing." The knowledge of the Son in resurrection puts them, in the knowledge of Him, into the use of new appointed relationship towards the Father. They were not to ask of Christ present, as strangers to the Father, but as knowing His place with them, and His place with the Father, "determined the Son of God with power," and their relationship with the Father by virtue of Him, they were to ask the Father in His name, and He would give. They could ask the Son from human knowledge of Him. They had never so seen the Father in Him, that by knowledge of the Son they could ask the Father for that they needed. Nor would it be merely at His persuasion of the Father, for the Father Himself loved them, but by virtue of their union with and the prevailing name of the Son. In and by Him they could so ask. He had spoken to them in parables. He had opened out to them the various ways of relationship, and shewn it as the portion of the children, and what that portion was

(in parables). But now He could declare Him boldly. He would cause them to know *Him*.

This would be fully developed when He Himself manifested the Father's glory. But it is not confined to this, because the Church is made cognizant of it by her spiritual perception of Christ as the Son in the glory, the Father being revealed by the Spirit; that is, in the Son, and all the glory of Christ testifying of this. He does not say, therefore, come out from the Father. This they had not really understood. They had believed His mission of God.

He then, in verse 28, describes the positive revelation. There were two things in utter contrast: the world and the Father. They could not unite. He left the Father, to come into the world; and left it, to go to Him. This relationship with the Father by the knowledge of the Son: in future in manifested glory and communion (which note); for 1 John i. shall be true then; now, by the testimony and revelation of the Spirit, of His oneness with the Father, and revelation of Him; and our oneness with Him, and the Father's love to us. So Christ does not ask the Father about us, but we loving Christ, the Father, His love centring on Him, loves us. They had believed that He came out from God, acknowledging Him.

But there was a further point: "I came forth from the Father." They had not understood the personal relationship. As the Son of the living God in the world they had owned, being given to own, Him; but they had not understood of Him as the Son with the Father, and coming forth from the Father. This was

the great revelation of the Spirit, as it would be of the glory. When He, being gone back into the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, He in spirit could "shew them plainly of the Father." The work being accomplished, and He, in His come glory among the Jews, being rejected, the full glory could be brought out. The shining through of any of this was the occasion of the rejection of Him in the other. This 28th verse is the declaration of the great leading truth which was behind all His dispensed manifestation. But their minds had not as yet really received it; for although they saw Divine knowledge in His perception of and answering what their minds were working on, and giving this explicit answer as to being seen no more, etc., or that on which it was founded, they did not fathom the real revelation in it, the revelation of Person and mission; His Person antecedent to mission, His own glory and His Father's, and all flowing from this.

"Now Thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb," but their perception went no further (not having the Spirit) than in this, "We believe that Thou camest forth from God." This the Lord had already acknowledged as that which introduced them into the love of the Father. But into that love as yet they did not enter. It is the fruit of the perception of the Spirit; that is, as known. The whole shewed the need of the Spirit in setting in the relationship. So consequently, "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts," etc.; and here our Lord was thrown upon this very truth. He was not to be associated with them in His own glory, but delivered up; and of them He must say,

"Do ye now believe?" As they said, "Now we believe." How little they knew themselves, or without the Spirit could go through the trial of faith, or think that the flesh could go through the death of the flesh! He was thrown alone upon this personal relationship with the Father, and its truth proved the power of death was to come in, and they be scattered, the sustaining power of Him in life being gone, every man to his own. There was no power of vital fellowship with Jesus in His Sonship, and then man's support is natural, he goes "to his own." How true this is!

But where was Christ's "own"? Nowhere here. He had none. He was left alone, and to be alone; only this thus declared, "I am not alone" (this great truth He had been speaking of to them); "the Father is with Me." When they were left alone (so far as regards the world) they would have this comfort of seeing Him so, but with this difference therefore, that He *had* overcome it alone in the conflict. In Him, though for profit's sake put through the conflict, they had peace. They could be of good courage, the world was overcome. Amen. Be of good cheer, glad to be in one which is the victory of Jesus. We can say Jesus is with us; *the Son*, He hath overcome for us.

The point of the 32nd verse is Jesus being completely thrown on the truth which He was disclosing, before the former truth was, so to speak, setting aside (though not before God). But the disciples were not beyond it, and the Lord therefore was thrown upon the intrinsic power of this, that alone in the trial He might receive, as having suffered through it, others into accepted, adopted fellow-

ship of the blessing as the risen Lord, "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

But let us follow the text. Here was the failure of all fleshly association even with Christ, because Christ relinquished the ground on which it was held by either suffering to take a better inheritance for them with Him, they wholly failing, so that there was none but He in it. But the Father was with Him; this was the consolation; and He gave them the same: "In Me ye shall have peace; in the world tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome," etc. It was said to set them on this ground: "in Me." He was out of the world, and they in it. He turned out of it, so they would have tribulation in it. His comfort was in the presence of One not seen to the world, where He seemed to be alone. In Him they would have the same. He had overcome. Thus His statement made the moral passing through of the suffering of His lonely death and rejection; and on this ground He speaks in what follows.

I have been struck particularly with the evidence in John that the whole course of the Lord's ministry (that is, beginning with chap. iv., where we have seen it publicly commence) leaves the Jews aside, as blinded, reprobate, and unbelieving. It is true that chap. x. begins the direct revelation of the election; but the Lord Jesus (being here as Son of Man and Son of God, not as Messiah to the

nation, beginning with Samaria, but teaching neither there nor at Jerusalem men should worship the Father) always treats the Jews as in a hopeless state of reprobacy, fulfils His testimony, giving proof of it by His works, till they accomplished their iniquity by His death, till (as it is expressed) His hour was come, and thus is the means of gathering many; but all through the Jews are treated in His dealings with them with the utmost severity.

He judges none, for He was not *sent* for that, and He always honours His Father (His true and highest honour as Man here for Him, He was the Son), not Himself; speaking His words, and doing His works. Also He states (without minding the stumbling-block therefore) the strongest truths in the bluntest manner, so as to offend them; for their time was really past. See chap. v. 42, 43; and vi. 43, 44, 61, 62, 65; vii. 6, 7, 18, 19, 28, 33, 34; viii. 14, 15, 19, 23-26, 28, 38, 41-44, 47, 55; specially here, because here they are put in proof by the word, as in ix. by the works. Note, He proposes Himself in both as the Light of the world; closes the viii. chap. with the assertion of His being the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "I AM," and the ix. with receiving the worship of him who had eyes to see, as Son of God.

In ix. the Lord has no intercourse with the Jews; they are convicted, by the effect of His works, of blindness, utter blindness, as pretending to see; and the Lord only draws the conclusion that He was come into the world for judgment (though not to judge). How sad an evidence all these chapters afford! After this, the Residue

of true sheep, the purpose of God, power of resurrection, and so His glory (as has been seen) as Son of God, and thereafter as King of Israel and Head of the Gentiles, are manifested; and then, as Priest, in voluntary humiliation of love, having all glory as come from and going to God, and having all things in His hand; that is, His glory and service during this economy on high. Afterwards He teaches His disciples their position in His absence; but all this was after saying to the Jewish wise men, "Your sin remaineth." And here I note the manner in which, while the various glory of the Lord (the only true One) is made apparent, they are tested as already opposed, and therefore reprobate (chap. x. 26). This point is stated distinctly in contrast with the sheep, who heard His voice, whom He called and saved.

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xvi. We get Him [the Spirit of truth] going onward in this work. It is not remembrance and present truth, but all truth and things to come; all truth while Jesus is on high (for He *hears*, being down here), and His future glory. In all He glorifies Jesus, taking of His, and shewing it; but all the Father has is His, so that He says *of His*, the unbounded inheritance of the Father's glory.

Note the character of the difference of the two sendings of the blessed Spirit in John xiv. and xv., xvi. In the first, as often noted, the Father sends in His Name. It is their comfort and sustaining; One who comes instead

of the One they were losing; leads them into all truth; all the truth, excellent and heavenly things; would bring Christ to them in Spirit, so that they would not be comfortless. He would bring all things to their remembrance which they had heard of Him while here, and teach them all things. He would stay with them, which Christ could not; and be in them, which Christ as then present could not.

When Christ sends Him from the Father it is more in testimony: "He shall testify of Me," the glorified Man; would guide them into all the truth; shew them things to come; bring down heavenly things, what He heard, when come down here; and shew them things to come down here: the double testimony, take the things of a glorified Christ, and shew them to them; and all that the Father had was His. Heavenly truth, prophetic truth, and the glory possessed by Christ, that is, all that the Father had; these are the three subjects of testimony; xv. 26, 27, gives the double subject of testimony generally, testifying of Christ exalted in glory, and bringing to remembrance all that He had said to them on earth.

Note, too, how markedly He is spoken of as down here. Whatsoever He hears, that shall He speak. He is in the place of a servant in the Apostles, as Christ was; only it was not incarnation, of course; but He was hearing, and speaking down here. But xv. 26, 27, gives His business down here, 27 depending on xiv. 26. But xv. 26, 27, makes it much more personal and blessed, and engaged their personal affections in their testimony. This would not apply to Paul, of course. He only speaks

of His humiliation as part of the immense scheme of truth and of grace.

We have seen the 4th of John bring the Lord into Galilee a second time in the way of life-giving power to one ready to perish. This is pursued in chap. v. in this way, that all means or ordinances are unavailable for healing, because they suppose the power which the disease of sin has taken away. Christ then heals by life-giving power. He gives the power needed; and the impotent man carries the bed he was couched on. At the same time the miracle is wrought on the Sabbath, setting aside the seal of Jewish Covenant, on the ground of the Father and the Son working in grace, as observed heretofore; and then the full development of life-giving power is gone into, life out of death; not merely healing; but the full bearing of this comes out, truth as wrought in Christ so as to deliver from judgment; for life-giving and judgment were both confided to Him; the latter exclusively, to secure His honour from all. This is more than intercepting death, though that be the power of life; it is life in Himself, and that according to the glory of His Person. It characterizes what He introduces in place of Judaism, but is eternal in its nature, and connected with the glory of His Person, though His official place, too; for, though Son of God, it is as Man He is manifested such here, and in that character judgment confided to Him. The end of the chapter contains testimonies which left the unbelievers without excuse. Assurance here is connected with not

coming into judgment. The life-giving power of the Son of God being exercised, it is not in order to bring into judgment.

The vi.th chapter is much more historical, the v.th being rather power connected with His Person. But of the vi.th I have spoken; only here I judge, the tossing on the sea, though general in principle, and the portion of the saints during the whole time of His absence, but it applies to their circumstances on earth and, I doubt not, to His return to His disciples there; that is, the Residue; just as His miracle was for the poor of Israel. The doctrine of the chapter replaces this by another portion. Christ is here the object of faith, not acting in life-giving power.

vii. After bringing out the positive truth of the glory of Christ's Person, and Himself (in humanity and death) the object of faith and the true nourishment of the Church, death being the drink of life to it; having given Christ as the true manna, and the substitute of the paschal feast; the vii.th considers the nation, as His brethren after the flesh, quite set aside, as having its portion with the world. The time for Christ to shew Himself to the world was not come. The true Feast of Tabernacles for Israel, He presents Himself as *sent of the Father*. If there was the moral disposition to do *His* will he would know of the doctrine. All is uncertainty and confusion in the people, the Jews (that is, those of Judæa) astonished at the position He held, wondering what the rulers were about. Had they owned Him to be the Christ?

At last they send to take Him; but Christ announces

His leaving them in a quite different way, and going where *they could not come*. Not only the Jews are set aside, but He is returning into a new sphere of existence, where they could not be. They would remain in their confusion; and, Christ going to the Father who had sent Him, they could not be there. But the Jews rejected, and Christ absent, the Holy Ghost would be given as a river flowing forth from him who had it. Instead of the manna and the waters of Rephidim, it would be Christ and His flesh and blood; and waters, not drunk, but flowing from the belly of him who drank of Christ. This flowing of the Holy Ghost would take the place of [the] rest of Tabernacles realized by Christ's presence, when He shews Himself to the world. It is more than drinking in the desert, it is the Holy Ghost taking the place of Christ's presence in the Feast of Tabernacles.

In the viii.th realities are brought out in the strongest and fullest manner, still beginning with reference to the Jews, but bringing out still further the full glory of the Lord Jesus; for vi., vii. were, so to speak, administrative; that is, what was so among the Jews surpassed with what Christ was; and so indeed v. Here the character of the Law is brought out, as taken out of the hand of man, and placed in the hand of God, using it to the conscience. But then Christ is not come to judge, though He could, because He would do so in reference to Him whence He came and whither He went. He is the light of life, and whoever followed Him would not walk in darkness, but have that; and He was shewing the Law to be universally condemnatory, the light of the world.

The Jews are shewn to be of their father the devil. All is shewn in its true spiritual character in this chapter; and Christ not only presents Himself as Son, Son of the Father, [shewing] that sin made slaves, and the Law held them in this position, but that the Son would make them free of the house, as the truth would deliver them from bondage. But things being pressed to the full bringing out of truth, the Lord not only mounts up to promise before the Law, but to him who by election was before promise: "Before Abraham was, I am." The Jews, fully aware of the import of such a phrase, again take up stones to stone Him. Thus the Divine Redeemer and Shepherd of Israel was cast out, after the full bringing out of who He was.

In ix., His sheep follow Him, to have part with the Son of God. The words of Christ, which revealed God His Father, had been rejected, and they would have killed Him, because they revealed God. But He worked *the works* of Him that sent Him while it was called day. Here also the Jewish position, in contrast with the light of God, is brought out. They saw the retributive justice of God in the blindness of this poor man. It was his parents' sin, or his own foreseen.

It was really nothing of the kind. To Christ it was the occasion of the working of Divine power, to give sight to the blind. And such was the real state of things. Really blind by nature, it was God's work to give sight. This in itself set aside the whole Jewish system. God was working in Divine power to one incapable by nature, instead of ordering justice according to conduct. But the manner is notable. He puts upon

his eyes what was doubtless a figure of His human nature, and when the power of the Spirit through the word is added he sees clearly. The Holy Ghost taught that He was the sent of the Father. The Apostle himself gives the word which solves the meaning of this remarkable act of Christ, the bearing of which is stamped with the clearest evidence.

The Sabbath Day, sign of the old Covenant, again comes up. The evidence of the Divine power sufficed for him who had received his sight. The reasoning of the others on these forms betrayed them. Yet they have, through the parents, complete evidence of the reality of the miracle. But the sheep, clearly enlightened, is cast out, to have share with the Son of God, whom he knew already as hearing the word of God. He believes, and worships. (Lord, give us thus to own Him who has gone through all things for our sakes, and to know that the opening of our eyes is His work).

This position is fully unfolded by the Lord in what follows [x.], where He unfolds the course of the Shepherd, His real position, as to Jews, as to Gentiles; the electing love of God; rising up from His obedient entrance by the door Himself to His unity with the Father, including His passing through death, as taking a new place in taking life again, thus perfectly pleasing the Father, whose ways and glory needed this; and death out of love to the sheep, for whom He would so give His life.

In all He stands alone. All Jewish pretension to it (even on this ground as shepherd of Israel) was false, and to plunder the sheep. He proves them unreasonable on

their own ground; appeals (if they do not believe His words) to His works, and leaves them entirely, after they had twice sought to stone Him. This closed the setting in testimony before them God thus manifested in Him, the revelation of His Father, who they said was their God; for His being in the Father, and the Father in Him, this was the truth brought out to them.

The rest is preparation for His death, with the proof of what He would have been as a present blessing and glory, had He been received. The Father renders Him this testimony as needed before He goes. We may remark the Jews treated as unbelievers, to whom no room for the testimony He had given remained (x. 25).

xi. As regard the Jews, we have the proof that He could have brought back (as to power) all the saints departed (I say "as to power," because He who knew man knew expiation was needed); in fact, it is the revelation of life in Christ, the Son of God, according to the form in which He held it, as to its effect. He has it in Himself. He is it. As Christ was the power of resurrection and life-giving, the Jews are the instruments of death, and that against Him; but indeed accomplishing God's counsels unknown to themselves.

In xii. we have first, it seems, the picture of the Remnant, beloved of God, and attached to the Lord, and that in principle in all times up to Christ's death; its true, but lowest, form in Martha. She serves willingly, even away from home, at the supper they make Him. In Lazarus we have the saints departed being brought to life again; in Mary, who had sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word, another kind of devotedness, so to

speak; her heart, attached to Him, enters into the circumstances in which He is. She anticipates His death, and attaches herself to Him as so leaving the world, yet in an affection yet looking at Him in connection with His ties here. She anoints His body for the burial. It is not Christ on high. It is, in the highest and anticipative sense, looking on the pierced One, and mourning; highest, because it is not after, as leaving a friend in doing it, but her heart entering into His devotedness in doing it. The Lord accepts this as opportune, and Himself insists on His going away. They remained here. One of His disciples betrays for money, even a thief. The Jews' hatred is open and violent. The secret of His thoughts and purpose of His heart was really with her who had sat at His feet. The Life-giver, the Son of God, was to die.

Next, He enters in as King-Messiah. The next step is His glory as Son of Man. The hour was come (for the Greeks demanded Him) that the Son of Man should be glorified. But if the Son of God here below, the Life-giver, must die, the Remnant only associating themselves with Him, so He to whom the glory belonged must too. Messiah, Son of Man, if it were not to abide alone, must die. There was something deeper than Jewish royal glory. If He had to say to man, and the glory connected in God's counsels with it, He must die. Full moral glory must be given in man to God; and in spirit these also would be with Him, must follow Him in this. Still, He deeply feels what it is, but in perfect grace and submission looks to His Father, who replies by the double glory of raising as

Lazarus, and raising to the better resurrection; and thus the Lord sees the world judged, and His lifting up on the cross the point of gathering to all. For if the cross be ignominy and death it is lifting up above the world, above every creature and everything in it, to attract or to deter. It is not heaven; but it is not earth, it is perfection before God in respect of evil; the highest thing, we may suppose, unless it be the enjoyment of God Himself, regard to whom, and that absolutely, it supposes.

For a while Jesus was still here as light. But in fact the Jews were blinded. They loved the praise of men. Christ revealed the Father, and the perfectness of the word which He spake would be the ground of judgment in that day. Still the Lord, rejected and cast out down here, was to go and to take His true place, that pl
which belonged to His nature, and His place
Father, which shone through all H
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high. It is not now His death entered into by a Remnant which surrounded [Him] with affection and testimony to His present power; His departure from earthly acceptance and glory, the setting sun of His earthly acceptance and place, with the bright rays of what it would have been had man had the heart to taste and accept it; but the full power of evil in Satan's influence in the wicked heart of man, in contrast with the full nature and official glory of the Son of God; and then His love to His disciples continuing as in that place, and to associate them with Himself as in it.

Having all *things* from the *Father*, and Himself coming from *God*, and going to *God*, and they to have part with Him, He passes out of the scenes where, in the midst of them, He would have been Son of David [illegible] Son of Man, surrounded by His elect and even risen [illegible] His own proper place with His Father and [illegible] proper key to all this part of the [illegible]. He shews them the continued [illegible]heir Servant, to wash their [illegible]n, personally, by the [illegible]et yet touched the [illegible] with Him also in [illegible]e. For here it [illegible]e. The same [illegible]nger received [illegible]h Himself. [illegible] them was to [illegible]race, the one to [illegible]the ground and [illegible]kedness. Where

Satan has possession of the springs of the will, there the heart is given up to his power, not as seeking an object, but hardening against even natural feelings; for every *man* would not betray his friend with a kiss. But this brought on the full translation of Jesus to His new, but rightful and perfect, place.

Note here, it is not in contrast with the Jews merely, but with His own familiar friend, betrayed on earth by him. He really was One who came from God, and went to God, and to whom the Father had committed all things.

Now He enters morally into it: "Now is the Son of Man glorified." This is remarkable. He was going to be glorified outwardly, but in Man; in Him who had fully (without sin) taken his place, heir of all his sorrows, and the counsels of God as to him; was not merely the object of these, but was to be the vessel of all that could glorify God. He had the glorious place of perfectly glorifying God in the most adverse and difficult circumstances, and made good His character in the midst of sin, which was opposed to it. And, as it could not have been otherwise, truth, holiness, justice, love, majesty, Christ gives Himself to bring out, gives Himself up: a glorious place for man, where the wondrous counsels of God have set Him; God thus is glorified in Him; then, as necessary consequence, and justice itself, God glorifies Him (as to position and outward glory) in Himself.

Nor is it merely hereafter in display, but a present, necessary consequence as to Christ Himself. Thus He enters into His new (and, as Son of God, old) and right-

ful place. *God* is glorified. He does not say the Father; it is "God is glorified," and thus in us through Him. Christ was necessarily alone here in now accomplishing it. The disciples could not follow Him now; yet (glorious thought!) they will follow Him; it is our place. Our present place is to be on earth for one another what He was for us. *All* human attempt to pass that way ends in failure and dishonour; as the ark was to go first, and then *when* it was a dry way because the ark had gone down into it, we pass Jordan as truly as the ark.

This evidently puts Christ out of the present scene; and on this ground xiv. proceeds. He could not rest here with them, but He goes to prepare a place for them in His Father's house; and He would come again, not to be with them as to the Jews and the world, but to take them to be *with Him*. But then they had seen and known where He was going, and the way; for He was going to the Father, and they had seen Him in Him, and He Himself was the way. But this was not all. Not only would He (ch. xiii.) purify them for communion, but He would, when ascended on high, obtain the Holy Ghost for those who obeyed Him, so that they would know He was in the Father, this full place of Divine personal glory; and, further, their own union with Himself, so that they should be as near as possible to the Father, they in Him, and He in them. This was the effect of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

But there was yet this further: He would not leave them, even down here, deprived of comfort and alone. He would come to them in a spiritual sense. If they

really loved Him (for they were troubled at His going away), they would keep His commandments. The Father would love them. This was an immediate affection, which they knew not yet; and Christ would manifest Himself to them; the double effect of walking in His ways. Judas asks how it could be that He should manifest Himself to them, and not to the world. The answer was, If a man walk according to Christ, the Father and He would come and abide with him. This was their present portion down here, till they abode in the Father's house on high. The Holy Ghost Himself would teach them all things, and bring all to their remembrance that Jesus said. He went away, indeed, but He left peace with them. He gave His own peace. Blessed portion here below! So that, if He placed them with Himself before the Father, according to the place He took, He left them also the place which He had with the Father on earth, the place of perfect peace, whatever He met with on earth.

Further, they were entitled to have joy in His joy; that is, to rejoice because He Himself was happy, not merely because He had made them so; a high and blessed privilege, shewing how He would have one even in heart with Himself.

This quite closed the series of revelations which treated of the transition from earthly, Jewish relationships, or risen with His disciples on earth, to His place with the Father in right of His Person, and in divine counsel, giving the revelation of their condition in His absence in respect of this, both as regards His Person and the presence of the Holy Ghost; their future

portion and present peace, meanwhile. Though there could yet be some communications, it would not be much, for the prince of this world now came: for Satan is such; for the rejection of the Son has shewn it. He had nothing in Christ, but His passing through the sphere of his power in death was that the world might know that He loved the Father, and obeyed to the end. The world, alas! would have hoped something from Satan's power to stop this witness to God. How often does it! But in Christ all this power of evil was truly the occasion of the full and perfect proof of love to the Father, and obedience to Him. Here the Lord closes His relationship with the world. "Arise," says He, "let us go hence."

What follows is a developed doctrinal discourse founded on all these truths. We may remark the parallel between the 7th and 37th verses, chap xiii.: Peter could no more know the bearing of that (typical) purification, necessary to have a part with Christ, in His real, now as Man realizing, relationship with the Father, than go by the way of death, which proved Christ's moral and perfect competency for it, into the Father's presence; competency for the glory of God, for He had perfectly glorified Him there where God needed it, in a new way (so to speak), and where man must do it. What a wonderful mystery! for who should obey for man but man, or could? for it would not have been according to the exigencies of God as regards man, nor of man under sin towards God. But Christ was Man obedient under sin, and with the perfect feelings He ought to have towards and before God there, and death, and Satan's power indeed, too.

The xv.th takes up the fact of the two great positions of Christ as setting aside the old or Jewish state. Christ Himself was the True Vine. Israel had been but the outward form. Note, all is on earth here. The disciples were already of it. But then it is in principle also the system continued *on earth* in its responsibilities. This might have been fully realized if the Jerusalem form of administration had continued. It is always true in principle of the Church viewed as on earth: fruit (whatever the gift) is derived from communion. They were to have Christ's place in testimony on earth, not as servants, but as friends who had His mind; that is, all He had received of His Father; that is, as down here on earth, perfect in His prophetic place among the Jews, come in by the door, though one with the Father, and speaking from Him. They were to be united among themselves, have this spirit in common which He had had towards them. All the means of true and full fruit-bearing in their position on earth are gone into. Their place in this was association with Him, and obedience, and disposing thus of all power in supplication.

Then He provides for their own proper joy also in this position. They would be persecuted, as He had been. Blessed privilege! But the Father not known, and He hated without a cause. The personal testimony of Jesus had left them without excuse. Had the old vine not rejected this last, this one proper, full testimony of the Father Himself, they might have remained in their position. Much, many, and various sins God could have pardoned in government; but they had hated the Father manifested in grace, and the Son (who had manifested

Him) present in grace, so that the breach was irreparable, and they must be left in their sin. And so it was written in their law. Thus the old vine was wholly set aside.

But there was another, of whom He had spoken already, who was to replace Himself; the Comforter, whom He would send from the Father (for now He takes His place on high), who would bear witness, and they also, as regards all His life here. Hence their entire rejection by the old vine as an ecclesiastical system, and that even in their blindness in thinking to serve God, as (they supposed) they knew Him according to the old system. But it was total ignorance of the Father and Him, the true, full, only real revelation of God (who was their God), the truth and perfect light which had now only really come into the world; the rest having been only really provisional.

The Lord had now told them what concerned their relationship with the old system, so that it would be a confirmation of their faith when it arrived. His presence with them (supporting all Himself) had rendered it necessary while He was with them. But they were still too exclusively occupied with the old, and their own circumstances, as left down here. None had his soul lifted up to enquire of what a God who was acting, and was not surely frustrated by the evil of His enemies, was going to do when Jesus was going. If (apparently by the wickedness of His enemies) He left, and all link was broken off down here, surely larger purposes of God were to be accomplished.

We may remark here that, as up to His rejection He had put in contrast His revelation of the Father and the

Jewish order, now He is the True Vine, instead of the old one; and the Holy Ghost reveals Him, while He puts them in immediate relationship with the Father. We may remark that the xiv.th chapter speaks particularly of the personal relationship of the Lord with His disciples in connection with His absence; the effect that this had upon them, and how both as to His having them ultimately with Him, and how He would be with them meanwhile, how they would enjoy it; the Comforter He would obtain, and the like; and this also in connection with His Person, what they had really had in Him when He was present, and how that bore on their association with Him even that He was going.

The other grand element, then, dependent upon the breaking of the connection of the Lord with the old vine (at least, of His apparent place in connection with it), was the presence of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost whom He would send, and that in connection with His going up on high. The effect and sphere of His presence was entirely above and independent of the Jewish question. He dealt with the world of which Christ was now the exalted Head. He took totally other ground than the Law and the Jews. He demonstrated the sin of the *world*, and that because they believed not on Him. His presence was the consequence of the Son's being rejected, and by the fact brought them in guilty. It demonstrated righteousness, because it shewed Jesus above, received of the Father, and taken from the world who would not have Him, to see Him no more. Awful effect of the justice of God the Father! But judgment was not executed on the world, but its prince was judged; for Satan

was proved to be that; but he had committed himself to the utmost in the death of the Lamb (and He being raised up and glorified), fatally for ever committed himself; he was judged; and the triumphant presence of the Spirit proved it.

Besides this effect of His presence, He would guide the disciples, and shew them things to come; and, further, take of Christ's (and all that the Father had was His), and shew it to them. Truth, prophecy, and the full glory of Christ was their portion under His teaching. Yet, further, Christ's absence was but for a time. He was not cut off, but going to the Father; and as this was really what was about to be accomplished they would see Him in a little while. This is a general principle. He was not lost, but soon to be here again; true for testimony on His resurrection, and finally at His return. Further, He placed them in immediate relationship with the Father. They should not ask Him, as if they could not go to God themselves; but being thoroughly associated with the efficacy of His work, and the acceptance of His Person, would go to the Father in His name, who loved them as attached to Him.

The Lord, in fine, speaks plainly as to His whole position, quite independent of the Jews. He came forth from the *Father*, and came into the *world*; and again, left the *world*, and went to the Father. The disciples perceive the plainness of His answer to their thoughts, but not its force, saying, Thou camest out from *God*. Nor had they, necessarily, the force to follow Him in the death which was His way to return. They would be scattered each to his own. *All* would be broken up by

His rejection and smiting, and He left alone (but the Father was with Him); but in Him they would have peace; in the world, tribulation. It was a natural enemy, but overcome.

Chapter XVII.

—1-3. Hitherto their case had been laid before themselves, not before His Father. So with Christians. Through His name they adjudge their place, their way, their trial and their comfort from the Word. This their case they lay before the Father which was in heaven. This chapter displays our Lord fully as having finished His own, and committed the work to them. The connection of the first three verses is thus the matter of these, and the whole may be for study and fervent supplication. But it is indeed well to draw particular attention to the method of God's counsels in these three verses. The Father had given Him, He declares, power over all flesh, that He might give eternal life to as many as He had given Him. Life eternal was to know the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He had sent. Therefore says our Lord, "Glorify

Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." Thus the Father would be revealed through the light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the Person of Jesus Christ. Yet is not this the end. "Glorify Thy Son," for the hour determined in Thy counsels is come; "to the end that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." But then, blessed be God for evermore! it was the counsel of His own glory to glorify Himself in that work of love, of giving eternal life by Christ Jesus, therefore "as," and the union of these, His own glory, which must necessarily be the end, with our being brought into the partaking of it through the abounding riches of His grace.

—5. "With Thine own Self." This might seem to mean that He was to be clothed with the personal glory of the Father; but does it mean more than *apud te ipsum*, in correspondency to "on the earth"? The position of "with Thee," in the various readings, marks the plain sense. It amounts in result to the same sense, and in this glory He is to come again.

Having thus conducted His disciples to the point of association, the point of death, where He was to be left alone, He turns to prayer, and presents them so left (first presenting the new power of the state of things) to the Father's care. Earth was now left. He had finished all possible manifestation of the Father's love there in vain. His eyes now turned to heaven. He was conscious He had declared the point at which He had arrived alone with Him. He poured forth His heart to Him concerning His Church. The earthly glory was closed; Messiah, sad word! rejected. He was now to

be glorified in His real glory, the Son with the Father, "an only begotten with a father." Heaven was the place to which His thoughts and portion were now lifted up, and His eye affected His heart. He thought of His glory there, and His disciples there. How determinate, how composed, how void of uncertainty or amazement in mind is the word, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee"!

The effect, the service, so to speak, was mutual; but One had been obediently humbled; therefore "Glorify Thy Son," that so glorified He might glorify the Father: always His desire and work, for He was the display, the brightness, of His glory in His own; but He had been humbled Himself, hidden His glory, therefore looks to be glorified as now in it, "that," etc.; for here it ends in the perfectness of the Lord's will and the competency of His glory.

Observe, moreover, our Lord had not been glorified, though all glory was His, and faith saw through to it. His had been the full display and acting of the Father's grace. "The grace . . . appeared." We know it has appeared. This Jesus shewed all through His life; the other was His, but not shewn, save in glimpses for a moment on the Mount of Transfiguration. But now, though it seemed through death, the Son was to be glorified, and the glory to be displayed from this. This was to be the position in which the Son was to be viewed; and then He proceeds to say what He had done for His Church, His desires and will. There were two points of the glory; that is, as manifested: power over all flesh; eternal life to as many as the

Father had given Him. It was not now Messiah's Jewish glory, but the Son's universal authority, power over all flesh, and these given to Him eternal life with Him, as we shall see. Here was the form and body of the manifested or manifestation of glory from His Person.

But this eternal life is not a distant thing, waiting for the glory and manifestation. "This *is* eternal life," a present thing, the knowledge had by virtue of this position of Jesus. First, the *Father* to be the only true God. They had known the true God in Jehovah, the God of the Jews. They were now to apprehend the Father as such, and so to stand in relation to Him as before the true servants of Jehovah, now known as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to know, in which alone they so stood, Jesus Christ whom the Father had sent, to know Him as Jesus, to know Him as the Anointed, to know Him as sent, and above all to know Him; for Jesus Christ, whom the Father had sent, was the Person to be known; and thus it is He is presented to us. He is these things, and is so sent, and the point is to know Him; and this is eternal life, to know Him with whom Jesus intercedes, the Father, "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Thus we have the opening presentation of Himself, the character of His glory as acquired intermediately, the power and character of eternal life and knowledge of the Father and Him. Then the Lord opens out the service and passage into another system detailedly: "I have glorified Thee on the earth." This is what Jesus

had done in the midst of and tried by all the evil. He had done it, done it perfectly. That was now accomplished in the rejected Jesus, in the place of the first Adam. He was now to assume the place of the Second. He had also finished the work given Him to do as the obedient Servant even to death. There was nothing left for Him more to do here which God could require, which His Father could require. He had given Him the work, that He should do it, and He had accomplished it, filled it up. He had glorified the Father in the rebellious world, and finished the work which He had given Him to do. This as a Servant. Now then the glory: Do you, Father, says the Lord, fulfil Thy part, Thy due part: "Thou, Father, glorify Me with Thyself." This was due. But then indeed, though due to Him as Jesus, it was the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. This was a taking up the title in redemption; and so as regarded the objects of the work also. But it was a return into His own glory, in that character which He had before as Son, before the world or any creature was. This was the great thing to be manifested in the glorifying Him who had perfectly glorified God the Father, the only true God, when His whole character needed to be shewn by evil, and could so be shewn in grace; all His character, even in the world, upon the earth, the great scene of Adam's (man's) question, and the perfect result in Christ, then to follow the glory. Thus far of the Person of Christ. Now of the objects of His work.

But observe that the glory is not spoken of as given. He is glorified as Man; but it is with glory which *He*

had with the Father before the world was. It is not given glory at all here as to His Person; but all the other things are, with remarkable repetition, spoken of as given because He received them as Head of the Church, as the Man; making the exception the more remarkable. There was given glory, and that He speaks of as also given after. The glory of His Person was not given. He had it with the Father before the world was. This is a remarkable and blessed point. It proves the pre-existing Sonship, and given glory, and the parallel glory with the Father. He had subjected Himself, indeed, though He were a Son; but it was the fulness which was His which He returned into (blessed be His name!) for the Church. So He speaks in equal terms (*v.* 1); and indeed *v.* 3, and here (*v.* 5). In the rest *v.* 2, thrice, *vv.* 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; and after, in *v.* 10, we have the connection. The remarkable accuracy of these passages is most striking.

—6. "I have manifested Thy name to the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world." This was Christ's work, manifesting the Father and His name. The resurrection was the great public testimony of who Christ was, and witnessed by the Spirit is testimony: "determined Son of God with power." But He manifested (which note, for He was able, thus the Lord,) the Father's name to the men actually given Him. It was not the world, but those whom the Father had given to Him. He manifested the Father's name to them, given out of the world. They were the Father's, and given to Christ. All this of Christ in office.

"And they have kept" not My, but "Thy word." All

this is the grace which identifies the disciples with the Father, and Himself their Servant, only given to Him. He did them all service, His competency shewn in this, the nature of the service now. But the Son could do it, for it was to reveal the Father. Christ's words, too, were His words. The disciples had kept His word. That was a great point; but that was not all: they had kept the present word, they knew the things given. Here was the blessing: "Thy name"; "Thine they were"; "they have kept Thy word." There was nothing short of full blessing. It was not Christ, the Son, short of or separate from the Father. It was His things He had given to His people, even while here in flesh in the world. Christ was not there, in Person and service, separate from the Father. This was the real truth now disclosed; always true, however dull they were to receive it. But, in keeping His, the comfort was they had kept the Father's: "And now," looked at as thus received at His hand, "they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee." They saw, not merely the David excellency and Messiah distinction, but the Father's glory in [the] hands of the Son; that all the things that Christ had given Him of the Father were of the Father, in the competency of the Son to hold. The Father was shewn, and it sufficed. Nothing more could be, save the actual glory. They knew that they were really the Father's. It was glorious knowledge.

The Lord all along here was speaking as Man, but asserting therein His unity with the Father. The reason was thus explained. They knew that all Christ's things were of the Father; and the manner of the revelation:

"For I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me." This was the manner of the revelation. And they received them. This was the Divine grace; but so in fact they received them as true by Jesus. But they purported to be words from the Father, therefore they knew them to be from Him; and thus the humiliation or assumption of no glory by Christ in Himself was indeed the revelation of all His real glory, though His humiliation was real.

We belong to a higher system. If we do not humble ourselves in this, our real belonging to another cannot, will not, come forth. For indeed the real power and consciousness of belonging to another, though not assumed, will make one grieved at, and it impossible to assume, the glory of this where evil is. There is great glory in being content to be humbled. But having received the words which He gave in His Father's name they knew truly and surely that He came out from Him; that was His real association and glory; and that the Father had sent Him, the authority of His mission. They had known One, as seen in Himself, in what He was; they recognized it: as, "Do the rulers know indeed that this is very Christ?" And they had believed; for this was not matter of recognition, but faith that God the Father had sent Him.

Thus known and manifested, having heard His word, and believed in Him that sent Him, and so having eternal life, He asks petitions about them: not about the world; they are not, and could not be, the subject of His petitions. He could not pray for unity as to it, but concerning "those whom Thou hast

given Me; for they are Thine." Thus He throws them, by the actings of His love, upon the necessity of the Father's love, and that by their fellowship and union as the Remnant. Then comes out the great truth: there is no distinction in limit, but perfect identity in common interest in all that was thus mutually theirs; and the Son was glorified (another reason for the Father's care over them) in them. They were the Father's, and all the Father's His. His the Father's, and He was glorified in them. And therefore here, besides the glory, the Covenant unity, in respect of the Church, and all that was the Father's and the Son's. How blessed and marvellous the love that sent the Son! How rich and unsearchable the grace in which, in the union of the Father and the Son, every available blessing between them becomes available to the Church, because the Father has given them to the Son, and "all of one" is His and theirs! The union and consequent mutual bond, so to speak, in the Covenant of the Father and the Son becomes, all of it (as afterwards prayed upon) the available blessing of the Church.

There is also most important truth contained in this word, "And all Thine are Mine, and Mine are Thine," and as standing counter to all false lights as to the dispensation. But I use it only now for the purpose for which it is used in blessing here. But we must take it as a positive and simple truth. Nor must "I am glorified in them" be left out. It is a great general truth. "They are Thine. . . . . and I am glorified in them," are two reasons. The other brings out the statement in parenthesis, and this last rightly appends on to the subsequent

part of the prayer, for it formed the necessary basis and plea of His praying for them and committing them to the Father in the persuasive plea, "they are Thine"; then they prayed for on the great basis of the Covenant, being the Father's and the Son's glory, peculiar to themselves; and hence not concerning the world; not thus afterwards in respect of the distinctive consequences; here of the actual relationship of love to themselves in which the Father's issued, and in which in accomplishment the Son would be glorified. Therefore He says, "Holy Father."

But this is the development of all the truth of the Covenant, not in which the Church alone is concerned, but the unfolding of the glory of Christ, the love of the Father, all Christ's to be the Father's, having no inferior association, and having the advantage of their situation, and all the Father's Christ's, shewing the real and full glory in which He stood as so holding them; Christ the middle point. All that Christ had as sent had the privilege, necessarily, and glory of the Father; that is, of being His; and all the glory and blessing, everything that was the Father's, was His also and so the sheep's glory too; and in them He was to be glorified. And so in some sort they to be brought into all these things common to the Father and the Son, for this community of the Father and the Son is the basis of all security of truth being known.

There was another point bringing out of this as to the state of the Church as the subject of prayer: "And now these are in the world." It was, we know, Messiah with His disciples in the world, but the development of

this glorious unity in the Father: "I am no more in the world," etc., "and I come to Thee." This was the position of the intercession then; they in the world, Christ not, but He gone to the Father, and now He prayed Him to keep them in His name. He had kept them in His name: for indeed, though called out in a Messiahship presented to the world (that is, the Jews as such), they were called out in the trusting of the Father's name, and so kept for the glory, not for that by the name in which its full character was stamped, "the Father"; not yet knowing its fulness, as we have just seen, but kept in it, and for it about to be revealed, though under the state of Messiah responsibly presented; but seen refusing to be so simply received, but walking as the Son of God, hence tried, exercised, and despised; rejected and tried too in being bruised so from on high, but to rise into the liberty of Sonship, and to call His disciples into it, but they in trial as yet in the world, and He not manifested, and then this their portion in knowledge, and the Father's truth received in the Son's word, and glory meanwhile.

And here we have very remarkably and deeply instructively the character of our Lord upon earth, His position, and how and whence led, and the bringing out of the disciples (compare Matt. v., etc.); the subsequent state of [the] Church, and the Lord's conduct as to publicity while on earth, and so a practical precept for us; for we are not yet manifested, but we are associated with Christ as He with the Father, with the knowledge of the Spirit. But we are in an earthly system, but we walk through no Divine earthly system to which we are

bound, formed for earth, but spiritual fellowship with the heavenlies; as Christ the hope of glory ("I am no longer," "I come to Thee," though "these are,") forms just the character of our estate, and thereon our association with the "Holy Father," kept in His name, in which, not in Messiah's, He came, in His Father's name, assuming nothing, as noted. They had been given to Him. He would have been acting not to sent purpose if coming in His own name. He came so entitled, fully and perfectly; but He declined (humbling Himself in this), and kept those who owned Him Son of God in the Father's name. When another comes (to wit, Antichrist) in his own name, him they will receive. It will suit their selfishness. Hence the desolation of the Jews in the latter day. But Christ not in the world is the point of faith. But ascended, and with the Father, He acted acquiescently in that ordained. He kept really in that which was ordained, in a far higher sense now His, and so in patience kept His disciples for it, continually in feebleness turning to the other, and hard to wean from it. This is the only ordained glory, not Christ in the world (which note); and this is the point of faith. This was vital and necessary, not merely an ordained glory as Messiah's was, though that true. Flesh and blood might in a measure reveal the other; the Father alone could do this; and if done before His resurrection it was a special, anticipative act, and so done to the disciples. How specially blessed is this committal by the Son to the Father of these His people whom He knew thus left in the world! This "whom Thou hast given" is an important change, and makes the sense, I think, very

clear: "That they may be one"; "Keep them in Thy name, that they may be one, as We."

The Son walked in the Father's name, as really one with Him, and so shewing His glory, being outwardly humbled, though concealing it; so, if leaving in Covenant revelation and unity in their own real nothingness, they would be kept as one thing. They had no independent existence. They did not belong to this world; they had no place in it, if they were kept in association with the Holy Father; as Christ's unity and union with the Father was shewn by His going up there where He was before; and known to the Church so called out they would have this (necessary) unity; for they, as nothing, were known together in Christ as belonging to, as of, the Father, being indeed together vivified by one Spirit, as one life was spiritually the Father's and the Son's; as they were one, so they in one Spirit as into fellowship in Christ, with the Father and the Son, as so one. This is a great glory and mystery, but it is by the one Spirit being the life, and bringing them into this fellowship of the unity of the Father and the Son, known in and by Him in whom they were. Out of this they had no unity.

"Holy Father" was the characteristic of unity, real unity; sons in holiness in Christ, but as, according to this name, the Father kept them as one, verse 11 states the state of the circumstances or case, the consequent committal to the Holy Father, and its operation and result. The Lord now opens out the state of their case more fully in detail, in contrast with their circumstances previously. He delivers up His charge to the

Father's hand, having failed in nothing: "While I was with them *in the world* I kept them in Thy name." Of the manner of this we have spoken already. The keeping in the Father's name is the great point in unity, because the unity as known to us of Jesus and the Father is the name of Father and Son, and the Spirit in us is a Spirit of adoption.

In the Father's name Jesus had kept them, and He had guarded them Himself, so that none of them was destroyed but the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled; for to this obeying the counsel Jesus was subject. He watched effectually, and when this was done, if bowed in failure, we see the Scripture fulfilled therein. It becomes the occasion of meek obedience; we have not failed. This was perfectly true in Christ; in principle is for us. The joy of the Son was His unity and fellowship with the Father, and now He was going to Him. He was not of the world. It was now evinced in His going to the Father, as true in His soul ever, and this fellowship and their bringing in unity into it as put thus into the Father's hand in the knowledge of His name, and ending in fellowship with Jesus known as gone to the Father.

This identical union in the Father's love, true in Him, communicated to them, gives them His joy (in their like, though unequal, weariness, but His joy). He had also given them the Father's word, not simply His "words," the instrument of their instruction as spoken by Christ in His reception, but the subject matter of the Father's mind expressed: "Thy word." And the consequence was, this being their portion, the world necessarily hated

them, because in necessary consequence they were not of the world, as He who was the very expression of that word, Who was, as it were, that word, was not of the world. As being His disciples they were no more of the world than He was. "I do not ask that Thou shouldest take them out of the world [though they be not of it], but that Thou shouldest preserve them [morally] out of the evil" that was there. Not merely "guard," but "Thou shouldest keep," preserve from it, out of it. This was the request antecedent to, and the foundation of, their earthly manifested unity. A separate people in the world was the character and foundation of the Church; a preserved people, as by the word given; hated of the world.

The former unity was towards God, as given and kept in the Father's name, their own unity mutually in power; this their character (in the word), and so the manifested unity. This is the position, then, of the Church, *out of the evil*, in unity, knowing the Father. Not out of the world, but out of the evil; its eye with Christ to heaven, hated by the world, having the Father's word from Christ; preserved out of the evil, though in the world. In result they are not of the world, *as* Christ is not of the world. By virtue therefore of their union with Him, and fellowship in Him, as He by virtue of His Divine power and fellowship with the Father, as a matter of fact they are not of it. But there was practical daily sanctification needful for them, to keep them, because of the applicability of their nature to the things of the world around them, from the evil.

Now, God the Father's truth is not simply communion

with Him, but the application of the principles of His character and revelation in Christ in detail to the circumstances, in contrast to and separation from, discerning separation from, the evil in which they were conversant. Thus they learnt by the evil, though not from it, and were sanctified by the truth, in knowledge of it, to God. That truth was the word of which we have spoken above, the subject matter of the revelation of God the Father in Christ, which put them in contrast and conflict with the world, and sanctified them from it in knowledge; "renewed in knowledge after the image"; so judging all things.

Then, so viewed, separated to God, and from the world as to evil: "As Thou hast sent Me into, so have I sent them into, the world." They were sent as witnesses of what Christ was, as He of the Father. They were merely sent; then they did not belong to it. They were sent as not belonging to it, as active witnesses of something else of which they bore the record into it, and they being thus sent in, "for their sakes" Jesus thus set Himself apart; in the world exhibited the power and character of complete separation to God, so that by the perfect exhibition of the truth in Him they might be spiritually sanctified. As He exhibited the pattern in power, so as the risen Head He became the source of the conformity formally: "Know Him," says the apostle, "and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death," the full extent of our sanctification in truth to God from evil, "for he that is dead is free from sin." Jesus set Himself thus definitely apart. He did not merely come and do

certain kind things, but He passed through the whole course of evil apart from it in power, and so that we might be sanctified in truth by the truth in Him, "the truth," as the apostle uses it, "as it is in Jesus" (see the passage). This was the pattern, example, and the power shewn.

But while they were thus the primary objects He did not pray for them alone, but for those who should believe on Him through their word, that they may be all one, their union into identity with them by the one Spirit. The Father was in Him by a Divine unity; for, save physically, things cannot be one else properly. He was in the Father by a Divine unity, yet He was a Man; shewing thus the form and power of our union with the Father and the Son. And this is still by the Divine Spirit dwelling in us quickened into union with Jesus. But this is the portion of the saints, and is practically so when the Spirit is present in power. But their portion is one in, as one in spiritual acquaintance with, the Father and the Son. It is [not] merely one as by the Divine Spirit dwelling in them corporately one with another, but one in actual fellowship, union in spiritual knowledge of the Father and the Son, one in us as so known as one, by the communion of the same Spirit; and yet so known as the Father and the Son by virtue of His manifestation, and the Church's knowledge of the Son by the [Spirit] come from the Father, by revealing unity of the Spirit, as of the Father by the Son, revealed and had communion with Him, and now it is Him actually known. It is known by those that have it. It flows from the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, the Son, and the Father in Him;

and in knowing Him in the Father our knowledge of unity in both, our knowledge of the Father, simple in individuality; this spoken of before in "Holy Father," of the Son in the depth of the Covenant, and thence in this fellowship of unity as to both the Father and the Son (compare Matt. xi. 27). And in this united common acquaintance of the Father and the Son, and unity thereby, is the world's witness: "that the world may believe."

The power of the word in identifying those who were total strangers with the preachers ("shall believe through their word"), making them one in the Father and the Son, in them as one, planting them (once strangers) into the same unity in the power of Divine and common unity, was evidence that He in whose name these things were wrought really was sent of the Father. The same unity, being produced in all that believed, was evidence of the divine power that accompanied it of the mission of Christ. The unity in the Son and the Father proved who the Son was, and so His mission. The glory of Sonship in rejected humiliation was Christ's glory upon earth. But it was more than this; for the thing itself was given. Christ had power to give what was given. This remarkably illustrates the supreme, and yet in His place, trusting and receiving position in which as Man He stood: "The glory which Thou gavest Me." The Holy Father's name, the unity of the Father and the Son, sanctified into conformity to the sanctified One known by the truth, was the previously spoken power of unity, now the glory.

Our Lord had sanctified Himself, set Himself apart for

their sakes, shewing the truth of righteousness with God. In His power, thus sanctified and separated to Him, they became by Him acquainted, in the knowledge of His unity with the Father, with the power of unity as to whoever was brought into it. But then it ended not here, because the consequent result of glory hung on it; that is, in the Person of Jesus; and then He, the Son, gives to them the glory given to Him. This constitutes the full power of unity. When I say "them," this is the position they are brought into; the glory is given to us. Here is the great triumph and blessing. Christ gives it, but it is His glory, the glory which is the display of Divine fulness in Him; given of the Father for the display of all the fulness; for He shall come in His Father's glory, in His own, and of the holy Angels; and He shall be glorified *in* the saints, and admired *in* all them that believe. How could they but be one when they have this portion where they have their very being by the glory being theirs, so that they are but in individual nothingness as in the glory, the glory which is the Son's, together? This is what they are in God's mind, therefore they are one: "That they may be one, as We are one." For the Father and Son being one are one in the glory, perfectly so, absolutely so. With us in the glory, so our blessing; as to them their independent existence, though still each knowing it.

Believers are made one, made one as in the glory. The glory makes them one, as the unity of the Father and the Son makes the glory, and, [He] being incarnate, we are brought by the gift of and association with the Son into the glory so given to Him, which fact gave them fellowship

with Him in that which, as to *Him*, was that which He had with the Father before the world was. Not that the given glory was essential glory; for Christ had the double glory, the glory with the Father before the world was, and given of love in Covenant place which He had in virtue of His humiliation, redemption glory. Into this we are brought, but into fellowship with Him who had the other. Therefore He says, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in one." This 22nd verse, it is clear to me, in full relates to future glory; and though it ought to be comparatively so now by the energy of the Spirit, then will they be fully perfected in one, the Father in Christ (in glory), and Christ in them. When all the saints have the glory this will be the case, for this actually takes them out of the occasion of disunion. The other end of it is that the world may know that the Father sent the Son, and loved them as He loved Him.

We may remark that it is not here "believe," as in verse 31, but "know"; and then, when the glory is, the world will know that the Father has loved them as Jesus, for it will be manifested in the giving of glory, the same glory. There may be measure of realization of the power of the glory, and so known; but this is only relatively in witness, and not properly. Thus the Lord is said to manifest forth His glory, and His disciples believed on Him; and this might be in a measure true with Peter and Paul, and the like, but not in the proper sense of the thing itself; for our Lord had not then the glory, but says, "Now glorify Thou Me," etc. So rather of us. But then the world will know. It is as far as it was

Jesus's in the world. The Church had occasion to shew forth the pattern of it as to personal conduct.

But it behoves us ever to remember that the connection of the Church is with Christ risen, and the glory which is His consequently; and hence the power which it shewed was witness, not simply of what He was Divinely upon earth, but of His risen glory, and pre-eminence over the creature, and the power of Satan in it; and hence He even could properly give the glory actually given Him, but in resurrection. And then the extent of the Father's love to the saints, now despised by the world, will be manifested to the world. Then they are perfected, all being now brought together into one, "that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and that Thou hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me," which is the consequence in blessed fulness, the world now knowing its full blessing, and they who were rejected shewn to be loved as Jesus in the glory given to Him, and so shewn accordingly. The manner and basis is spoken of differently. The former was their communion in the knowledge of the Father and of the Son; and therefore the Lord says, "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." This is the Church's portion. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." Now it is "I in them, and Thou in Me." This is the order and manifestation in the glory, the Father manifested in the Son, He being in His glory, and He glorified in the saints who are in His, in which all the rest follows, which could not be till then *properly*. Thus the prayer embraces the whole condition of the saints. I say not in what

measure of manifestation it may be meanwhile, for it is written, "I have given." He is exalted.

First, from *vv.* 11 to 20, their condition as set in the Father's care. 19 is more His exalted state, and properly His exalted state, not His humiliation. Then 20, 21, the actual fellowship of the Church as knowing the Father and Son, so sanctified into the glory, and His Person known properly and fully therein. Then the gift in result, giving them the glory given Him, and its result. 22 states what is given them, not the place where it is enjoyed. It is therefore the positive portion of the Church in the love of Jesus exalted. Its partaking is a matter of prerogative certainty in the due and appointed time.

The other point follows to the end of 21, that is, "demand," what Christ was presenting to the Father concerning the Church then, is a great fact: "I have given them the glory which Thou gavest Me." I have given it to them: this was manifested, through faith. Power more properly flows from His Person, which is not the glory given in humiliation, afterwards in universal dominion and glory. So in measure in us. The world had accordingly despised them; but then it was to be seen that the Father had loved Christ's people, even as Jesus, in Jesus's care.

Then comes what the Lord's own desire and delight is, His wish: "That they whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am"; when the world is to learn "that Thou didst send Me"; just these that received Me, "where I am," "with Me." They had tasted His humiliation, and were to see His glory. The world indeed despised and hated Him, and despised His disciples.

But this was a thing much prior to the world, a thing (even the Father's Covenant love to Jesus, to the Son), paramount to all the world's thoughts and interests: "Thou lovedst Me," and I must have these, whom this poor, fallen world rejects, "with Me" there, for My happiness, even in that glory which Thou didst thus prepare for Me, that they may see what really belonged to Me, though the world despised Me, and they knew My reproach. It was a counsel antecedent to, paramount to, the world. He was not praying for the world now, but for the identification of that, the disciples and believers with the glory which was above it, setting out the whole Church's position, up to fellowship according to His own desires, and for His glory, in that according to His love. This was His "will," His delight.

Then comes, hanging on the last words of 24, it is not only the delight of Christ's love, the body's identification with Him in that which was the fruit of the Father's love to Him before the foundation of the world, and into which He had now brought them, but it is now, as things then stood, a matter of righteousness; not now "Holy Father," confer these blessings, but "Righteous Father." Here is the state of the case. "The world hath not known Thee," so proved in their rejection of Christ, and the Father in Him. This was the cardinal hinge as to the actual state of the matter in Christ's glory. "The world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou hast sent Me."

Foolish world! with all its self-importance, [it] crucified Him whom the Father loved before its own foundation,

and merely because it was ignorant of the Father as well as Him. What, then, did it know? Not itself, surely; no, nor yet the Spirit of truth when it testified of these things. It counts itself wise simply because it is ignorant; but unto them who are called there is One "who of God is made wisdom."

Little indeed did our Lord enjoy of His proper glory in such a world. It was in the sense of this, as the Man Christ Jesus, that our Lord here appeals to His righteous Father; suggesting, if I may so speak, in the spirit of prayer as entering into His presence, where His own soul had refuge, that they had indeed known Him. Nothing more. It was, as it were, a vindication of His own glory, universally in right to be acknowledged, and thus giving ground for the pouring out of His spirit in humiliation, entering into glory in the access of His deepest separation. "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son." "But I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." And note how He transfers the privileges to those to whom He had made known the Father, who had owned His mission from the Father: "And will declare it; that the love," etc. So that it is given to say, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God," etc. This opening out of our Lord's feelings is worthy of the deepest study.

But I say, I measure not the measure of manifestation. "We see through a glass darkly"; but the things we see are the glory. We sit in heavenly places in Christ, though not actually, as in verse 24, with Him. The glory which we have now, perhaps a reproach, is the glory that remaineth. We

have it not in glory, but what we have is *to menon eudoxee*. We are partakers of the glory that shall be revealed, and in our union with Jesus by the Spirit we have fellowship with the glory, moral power, though not yet revealed; but the result is "where I am." In this we return to xiv. 3, and know that it is upon the coming of Christ.

There are two points: the world will know then the mission of Jesus, and love to the Church. As to Him being where He is, their delight after all will be in dwelling on His glory: "may behold." And then will be manifested in glory the love wherewith He was loved before the foundation of the world, and we *in it*. As to the Church, "Holy Father"; but, now manifested "Righteous Father," He would so deal even now distinctively upon this love to Christ, Immanuel. "The world hath not known Thee." Before the foundation of it Jesus was loved, and it did not know the Father. The distinctive treatment was therefore just. Love in Him had been manifested to it, as in this Gospel. III. 16, 17, and following is thus connected with 24.

—25. "But I have known Thee." He speaks of Himself as thus separate from the world in it. "And these have known" (the commencing point of vital union) "that Thou hast sent Me." 25 a justifying reason, as 24 contains the blessed purpose of love in Christ. Having received Christ as sent of the Father, the consequence followed. His revelation was received and efficient. He, Jesus, declared the Father's name to them; not an idle work, but an effectual revelation of Him in that relationship. He had done so in life; He would do so

in resurrection. The same thing indeed, but now effectual in its character: "That the love" (that is, the Father's, with which He had loved Him,) might be in them, and He in them.

Declaring the Father's name was indeed putting them in the place of sons, partially in life, vitally in power. His constant work now being so, they stood in that relation in which the Father was perfect towards them. The love wherewith the Father loved Him was in them, for Christ's revelation of sonship (which note) was the real communication of bringing in fellowship with Himself. It was giving the communion of sonship, as He says therefore, "May be in them, and I in them." Thus He dwelt in them in the power of known sonship; for it is not here, note, as before, "that the world may know." That was the giving of the glory; this externally is manifested as by the glory; but now the general present position of the Church as informed by Christ in contrast with the world, as brought into fellowship with Him by this following His word in indwelling sonship, the love in them wherewith the Father (the righteous Father) had loved Him, and He also. This was the general and characteristic state of the Church, as the previous points had been its successively developed characteristics (*v.* 11), by the "Holy Father" kept one in their actual relationship in fellowship with the Son; still ever true. Secondly, as called in by the Spirit, and so as "Thou in Me" and "I in you," known by the Spirit separate from the world, one in them. This is communion by the Spirit; then the glory by which manifested to the world; thus

characteristically the given state of the Church in the disciples. The 26th is a blessed and distinct verse. It is a blessed and glorious chapter, and yet full of simple truth.

Before we turn to the facts which follow we would turn a little to the order which precedes. We have seen the closing *moral* rejection of Jesus in viii. and ix., manifested in word and deed. In x. consequently we have what concerns the sheep, and the unity of the Father and Him in this purpose, their rejection of Him in this character. Then the open manifestation before the nation that He was this, in the power in which He could have brought in blessing. Then the deliberate rejection to death of the Prince of Life; but so the purpose of God brought in. This by the public authorities, who should receive and understand. Then the developing apostasy in Judas (see on Psalm cix.). The manifestation, but for their rejection, of His preparedness; received, to fulfil all their hopes; praise fulfilled out of the mouth of babes and sucklings; riding King of the Jews. All things prepared on the part of God; the Gentiles ready to come in, as xii. 31. All this belonged to His character abstractedly; that is, as not involving death.

The Lord then states the necessity of His death, and that His disciples must follow Him therein. But it was the judgment of the world withal, and of the prince of it; and the attractive character and power of Christ was by His death, rejected out of this world, not accepted in it. This was the point that brought the Jews to their bearing. "Messiah abideth ever," how

then "lifted up"? The warning to them. Verse 35, a little while the light with them, but they in very deed walking in blindness, 38-40 shewing their now real state. Then returning to the consequent position of the world, though rejected in the Jews in His place, as of or in the world. The Son with the Father, and so believers on Him believers on the Father. "I am come a light into the *world*, that *whosoever believeth* in Me should *not* abide in darkness." Gentile and Jew were both in it now, and He being rejected of the world. Here His proper new sphere in which He called the Church came out; and this He opens out in its moral power to the close of the chapter, and what the reception or rejection of Him really was individually. Then follows, consequent upon His final rejection and cutting off through Judas, His service as to the *Church*. First His continuous love to His own in the world to the end. Then His ministerial office in service of the brethren, priestly in its character, and their place with one another. He knew whom He had chosen. Then the ministration of present communion under this. The absence of the Lord, and their strength meanwhile in their love to one another. Natural life could not follow a rejected Christ. Then from xiv. to xvii. comes the whole position of the Church in Christ ascended on high till the close, all that belonged to them therein, as in union with Him, distinctly and fully brought out: xiv., their general state of relinquishment, and position under it; xv., their mystic Church union, not merely vital, in the Christ as the True Vine, the only faithful One found; the state of the old branches; the witness in

them and by them; the expediency, xvi., of His departure, and the coming and witness and work of the Holy Ghost; His return; their state toward the Father, and their real whole state because of which His mission really was; the inability of the flesh to walk in His steps to the Father; nevertheless He had overcome the world; xvii. the intercession for them, and putting them, of His Priesthood and office, in their right place, and then in the glory; that is, shewing it as their known portion.

It is very much to be noticed how it is the Father's word that is spoken of in John xvii. The Father and the world (as long ago remarked) are in specific opposition. They have the Father's word, that which reveals a whole state and order of things of Him, according to His presence, His affections, His house, of which Christ the Son is the centre; and the world hates those who hear it. Their place and relationship with the Father are the Son's. They are not of the world, as He was not; even if in it. The Father's word is truth, and by that they were to be sanctified. The world is vanity and a lie; they are formed in affection and heart by the Father's revelation; but Christ especially is this, the centre and central object of the Father's house. So He sanctifies Himself, sets Himself apart to this place as Man, Son with the Father, that what was in Him might, as possessing their affections, set them thus apart to what was of the Father.

Hence, also, those brought in by their word were to

be one in the Father, and the Son one in us ; the Father delighting in the Son, and in Him ; the Son in the Father, and in Him. Nothing could be more absolute there. They were thus fully brought into communion with both ; and, living in the Father's blessedness (contrasted with the world), where Christ was the Son, were to be one in them ; no two thoughts, but one ; no two objects ; no two delights ; no two joys ; they were to be one in that blessedness of the Father's delight and fulness, of which Christ is the centre, and the filling object ; even as, in the lower order of the glory of the heavenly city, "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb was the light thereof."

More completely John xiv. Christ is the object of faith ; not with them. But He goes to prepare a place for them, and comes again to receive them to Himself, that where He is they may be. He has revealed the Father in Himself, and so they know where He is going, and the way. Then by the Comforter they know they are in Him, and He in them.

In obedience He manifests Himself to them when and as not to the world. His Father and He dwell with those that keep His word. Besides, for this He leaves peace with them ; gives them His peace. They are not to be troubled and afraid. Then more particulars of detail are in it for them especially. Asking anything in His name they had it. The Comforter brought all things to their remembrance. Loving Him they would be glad He went to His Father. The Lord had now

closed His present relationship with the disciples as a Remnant connected with the Jews, and gets up, and leaves that association: "Arise, let us go hence." Fatal word for Israel! He had shewn it, anticipatively, in getting up from supper, in view of His priestly action in xiii.; but He had not done it historically. Then He sat down again.

Hence in the following chapter (xv.) He declares that Israel is not the true vine at all. He is the True Vine, and the professing disciples (then the eleven) are the branches. But note here He states the general truth: "I am the true vine. . . . . Every branch in Me." Then He affirms a particular truth: "Already ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Thereafter He distinguishes them and the general truth, 3-5; clean disciples, 6, "If a *man*"; 7, "If ye"; and then, "My words abide in you," etc. Thus we get Christ, as the True Vine, supplanting Israel, as in Isaiah xlix., and then the Holy Ghost come when He was away. They had a testimony, and were to abide and continue. The Holy Ghost would bring down His own testimony from heaven, while (according to xiv.) helping them also in theirs. This completes this part.

xvii. He unfolds, as we have often seen, their whole place with the Father and with the world, and at last (24) shews their true place in heaven, and the Father's love while we are here; but, note the word, sanctifies them through, not the, but *Thy* truth. It is the Father's truth they were to be sanctified by, that revelation of the heavenly state and what Christ is as Head of the new creation before the Father, what is conformed to the

counsels of God as before the world, and the new glory in which Christ was with Him, His Father; theirs according to His own nature, and which is brought out in what is heavenly, as a system displayed before Him, according to those counsels.

Christ was this as a Man on earth, but it could not be received there. We enter into it as setting, through the revelation of the Holy Ghost, our affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This was before the world existed. So the promise of eternal life was given us in Christ Jesus before the world. It was manifested in Christ's *Person* in the world, if men could see it (so far as they did they saw and hated it). It is established in Christ now as Man at His Father's right hand; and will be in full display and result when the heavenly company are complete before God in heaven. Hence the world is always in opposition to the Father. We are not of the world, as Christ was not, but sanctified by this truth, the Father's truth.

All through this part of John the way in which this rejection of Christ has thrown the world in evident opposition to all that we are brought into, to the Father, is very remarkable. It is a rejected, outcast system; condemned; judged; never to see Christ as there in it, if connection had been possible. Again, the Holy Ghost is the testimony, because it is down here witness that Christ is rejected, and received by the Father. Such a view of Christianity makes a total opposition as to place and walk with all that connects it with this world. The striving of the Spirit in us is against the flesh, for it is simply evil (born of flesh; born of Spirit, spirit), but it is

co-ordinate with the world; *and so is law*, which the Spirit sanctions, but supplants as the power of the new creation. But this by the bye.

The point here is the world (grown up according to flesh) away from God, and the new creation, and to us, but really, in Christ, glory (who is also Eternal Life according to this) before ever the world was, and now rejected by the world, so as that the breach and contrast is irremediable, re-connection impossible; realized in Christ's Person, as Man entered into glory; brought to us in faith by the Holy Ghost sanctifying us thus (compare 2 Cor. iii.), by the Father's truth fulfilled in the new creation, when we shall be taken into the glory, and like Him. This was before the world existed, and is the mind of God as to man, and what is to be in result in man, and all subordinated creation before Him. The xvii. John gives it fully.

—xv. and xvi. are dispensational dealings in time, conformable to it in respect of Israel, as of the old thing (also disowned), and Christians.

—xiv. shews us Christ's revelation of it when on earth, and the Spirit's shewing us we are in Him where He is entered personally into it, and how far it is realized in obedient ones now.

—xiii. He maintains us in daily fitness and competency for it.

When Christ's death came in it was the judgment of this world. He was witnessed Son of God through Lazarus's resurrection into this world, and the Father glorified; Son of David in riding in; but when He is to take the place of Son of Man (which He was in Person)

He sees He must take it (if man was to be thus brought in) by death, and so have Psalm viii. If Psalm ii. was in a certain sense possible when in flesh (not really so) this could not be. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground, and die. This He sees in all its gravity, but submits, and seeks the Father's glory, and then sees the *judgment* of this world, and its prince cast out; and He were thus the attractive centre for man.

But this was at the basis of the matter. It is personally and dispensationally considered in xiv.—xvi., and fully brought out, yet as to the disciples then, and us as in this world in xvii., or displayed in glory in it; only the 24th verse makes us enter into the cloud to enjoy what was before the world in the glory of the Son loved then. *This is* brought into our hearts now. The heavenly character of what the Lord was leading them into has come far more forcibly before me as referring to, and connected with, what was before the world, and in opposition to what was in the world, and Judaism, too, than ever; not as a new principle, but as distinct in perception.

I return to put a little more complete the end of John in order. XI., Son of God in resurrection for this world. XII., the little Remnant who entered into the consciousness of the rising hatred of the world. His place as Son of David. Then, as Son of Man, as taking the heathen, He must die, and His disciples follow Him in the same spirit down here. But the world is judged, the prince of this world cast out. He, as crucified, rejected

from, lifted up from, the earth, is to be the attractive centre for all. (Giving up what we have for God is getting more according to His own power). In the xiii. as He now must depart from them, He having fitted them by regeneration essentially for being with Him, maintains it as to communion, He having all from the Father, and going to God according to His nature, as He had come from Him. But this is morally made good in the cross, in which all that God is is glorified, and so [is] the Son of Man in doing it. The disciples in flesh could not follow Him there, more than the Jews; but they were to love one another. The pretension of flesh to do it only led to denial of Him, when it was tested; a solemn lesson.

Then He shews (xiv.) that where He was going to had been manifested on earth (an important point as to much of His mission and what is said of it), for He was going to the Father. Hence "the way"; as coming to Him they found the Father. But when He was gone they would know more that they were in Him in that place, and He in them, and know that He was in the Father. He does not say the Father in Him; that was more manifestation on earth. Thus, besides their practical state, the full association with the heavenly thing was now taught. Hence He calls them to arise, gets up from His place of being with them here below, and leaves that. By the Spirit in obedient ones He shews Himself, and the Father and He make their abode with a man.

Now He shews that Israel had not been even the true vine of promise. Thus not only sinful man, and

any connection of God with him, was set aside, but all fleshly religion and connection with God. He was the True Vine. They were to abide in Him. If His words abode in them too they could use His power; and they were to abide in His love. This even disappeared literally, but not in its analogy, nor in its power. As to the Jews, they had no more any cloak; and, in fact, they had both seen and hated both Him and His Father, They would be witnesses as having been with Him.

The other point here, and for the heavenly part and glory of Christ, was that the Comforter would come. He would shew the world's state, righteous against and out of it, and its judgment; Satan being its prince, and judged. He would reveal to them the heavenly Christ. They would be in direct relationship with His Father in this state of things. They had believed He came out from God. He had come from the Father, and returned to Him, leaving the world. This closed the communications.

In xvii. He puts them in their whole place relative to the Father and to the world. And now they were set apart to the heavenly thing; and, being not of the world, were sent into it. Finally, that they were actually with Him when He was going into what He had as *loved before the world.* Meanwhile this love, as applied to Christ, would be in them; He being in them to draw it there, so to speak.

This leads me to dwell on another point: how the Church, and our election in Christ also, is so very distinctly put forward as not of but before the world. Christ was life. Christ, as Son, was with the Father

in His own glory before the world was; and in Him, as to the counsels of God, the Church was set up, and we had the promise of eternal life in Him before the world existed, and we were chosen in Him then. There was no world, or system of the world, in being then. He who was this life, and manifested the Father, came into the world.

Nor was this all. The world had departed from God. The elect, in themselves, all who now or yet may form the Church, were like all men in the world, of it, as regards life and nature, children of like nature with the first Adam. In this position, and according to this relationship, we were responsible. Then we were mere lawless sinners; or, the Law having been given as the perfect measure of this state as it is, breakers of it. But all that belongs to the world state and creature condition. The rule was elevated morally, and was the perfection of a creature with God in its own responsibility, what was its perfection. But the *world* had departed wholly from relationship with God in it, and if they had the Law had broken it. Nor was this all. The Father was manifested in it in goodness in Christ; perfect goodness, and towards and in man, "good pleasure in men." The Father was declared, revealed; revealed, adapted to, presented to, man. Man entirely rejected it as man, elect and all, without difference; and Christ dies, and leaves it, and takes as Man His heavenly place and glory He had before the world was, what was before the world in His Person, and in the counsel and mind of God as to the Church in Him; now, however, heavenly, in the sense of man being there, and actual

setting up. The Man of eternal counsel is the heavenly Man; the world, the intermediate thing, being judged, condemned, and done with. Christ had come (from and manifesting the Father) into it; was rejected, and it was condemned; and the Church, which was known and in purpose before the world existed, was brought actually out in connection with the heavenly Man, the true Man and Eternal Life, Christ, the centre of all God's purposes.

He had glorified God as to the intermediate and responsible thing; not only personally in His life, in which He was alone, but in respect of sin and sinners on the cross; so that the glory of God was also fully brought out, as indeed it could not have been otherwise. And He takes His place as Man in virtue of both the title of His Person and God's righteousness as to His work. So John xvii. But there the counsel of God, His object and delight before there was a world at all, comes out too. The Church is united to Him, as in heaven, by the Holy Ghost, and the universe itself is to be put under the risen and now heavenly ascended Man, with the Church associated with Him as His body and bride. Hence all that takes Christians back to the world, to the Law, to all that flesh has its part in, takes them back to the system they were redeemed out of. That they do not, and as in Christ, never belonged to at all; the Law being the measure of responsibility in it, the intermediate system antecedent to which the Church had its place with God, before the very sphere in which mortal man has had being existed; the Church which God has now set up actually in the heavenly

place into which Christ has entered, when the man or Adam sphere, the world, has rejected Him, not knowing the Father.

Under this Man and the Church the world will be. But we are not of it, as Christ was not of it, but of the Father, and now gone to Him, Man with Him, and we in Him. Of this the Holy Ghost is the revealer and the power, uniting us with the Head. But the Law as a true measure, fleshly religion and its ordinances, the attempt to regulate the world, all belong to the Adam system, though the first be God's rule for it, not the Christian; it is going back to it, the beggarly elements. This it is that Paul insists on, the Church's place connected with redemption, the Divine place of the Son before the world, with which (as now made good and returned into) the Church is connected with the Holy Ghost. It is true of life, life and incorruptibility being brought to light by the gospel; only this life *existed*, before the world was, in Christ; hence has in itself been true all through; whereas the heavenly Man, Man in heaven, and the Church raised up, and in Him there, did not and could not exist in fact; for He was not there as Man.

But in what a place this puts the sticklers for law, and those who insist on influence in the world for the Christian! No doubt the Law is perfect; but they are putting man back, out of Christ on high, into the system of the world and Adam responsibility. John is just as clear as Paul as to eternal life and Christ's place, but he does not treat the question of the Church. Paul was made the minister of that. Hence Paul would

not know Christ after the flesh; that is, Christ as connected with the world, come to it in connection with men's Adam existence, in which Judaism was the testing form, and hence in His Jewish connection, to which He had offered Himself, and had been rejected. Hence, while fully owning Him as the fulfilment of promise (even as to this only in resurrection) he would only know Him as He had been revealed to him, the glorious Christ who had taken His place, really His own, but as Man, according to the eternal thoughts of God before the world in which man, as responsible creation, was tested. Hence our conversation is to be in heaven, and our life the display of that of Christ. This is the mystery (Ephesians i. as a whole) of Christ; as to its form down here, Eph. iii. So Christ hope of glory in Gentiles (Col. i.).

I fear I have given this confusedly and feebly; but the subject is of first-rate practical importance; it alters the *whole* nature and character of Christianity, and enters into every detail of life. Am I a living man, a child of Adam? or have I died and risen, so as to belong to a heavenly Christ, drawing life from Him, and having to display that, not take the Law for my guide, as still alive in the flesh? This put down flesh; dropped Judaism, which was in it; revealed the Father; shews we are in Christ (who is in heaven), and He in us. This shews the Church now wholly heavenly, as suited to the heavenly Man, the fulfiller in fact and object of pre-worldly desires, thoughts, with which the world can have nothing to do. It did not exist when they were in God's mind, and so the Church cannot belong to it;

yea, exists as composed of those redeemed out of it, and connected wholly with the rejected and ascended heavenly Christ. The world is "this present evil world." The two great points are eternal life and the Church; connected with Christ as Son and as Man set far above all principalities, etc., in heavenly places. The Church exists only in connection with Him. With the former part the opposition of the Father and the world, of which John speaks; for in the world of this creation the Son revealed the Father, and the world did not know Him, would not have Him. But what and who He thus was He has been transferred, and as Man, where that glory is at home, heaven, the Father's house, and there the Church is united with Him through the Holy Ghost; as, as individuals, we have our heart and home there, expecting Him to come and take us there. Where has the Church got? What is the putting it under law?

Note here how the *manifestation of the Father in Christ* stands in connection with the heavenly thing, though the disciples could not know it by the Spirit of adoption as themselves in connection with it. But what was manifested in Him was the Father Himself; hence the Apostle: "Whom none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Note, in practice as to this, what is said: "We are *clear from the Law*." We have not ceased to exist, but we have been nullified (*vernichtet, annulled*) as regards, cease to have any existence, *as to law*; my existence is annulled (Romans vii. 6, flowing from 4). Then on the other hand Gal. v. 4: "*Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ*

whosoever of you are justified by law." So death: "*Who has annulled death*" (2 Timothy i. 10).

The first two are very remarkable in their contrast. The Law is not annulled, but we from it as dead in Christ; we are no longer thus alive as in the nature in which we were of this world, children of Adam. On the other hand, if we turn back to this, we turn back to life in the world and flesh. Thus the two things being contradictory we nullify ourselves as regards Christ, do not exist as and in connection with the risen and ascended Christ, who is out of the world. Hence, too, what is heavenly, what is Christ, is necessarily the cross down here.

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xvii. It is not only blessedly true that we are a common object to the Father and the Son, but that Christ's, the Son's, interest is entirely in what belongs to the Father. This was His perfect place: "I pray for them; for they are Thine." But this is part of the great truth that, while everywhere one with the Father, He in John takes the place of subjection and receiving (though He were Son). This is a very striking feature of this Gospel, and of the Person of the Lord as with us; and even as to the truth (God is not the truth; He is the subject of it), though the truth be a thing in itself which the word tells, yet when applied to us. Christ sanctifies Himself, that we may be sanctified by the truth. Grace and truth *came* by Him; and now He sanctifies Himself, that it may be realized in us: "Which thing is true in Him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." God is *true*, but not the truth.

But other things are opening in the chapter, besides those heretofore found. What characterizes John's Gospel in the most peculiar manner is the Son's being equal with the Father, one with Him, and yet at the same time subject to Him as Son upon earth; all His language that of equal with Him, yet doing nothing without Him; all in obedience, receiving all now. Evidences of this run through from the first chapter all on. Now, this is the case here. He is (though just going; the hour come,) speaking in the world; and His disciples, (save verse 24) looked at as in it. All the unities then are in the world, though the last be in glory. But the first is as the state from which the activity parts, not the activity itself; that begins verse 14. The Lord there looks that they may be one, "as We." Now, He is on earth, but one with the Father. Hence, through unity of nature and Divine union in the Godhead, He has the purposes, objects, thoughts, way of feeling, seeing (to speak with human language), the same mind with the Father. He takes the place of service, but is one with the Father: "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.' He looks for this for the apostles according to their places; not only one morally, as partakers of the Divine nature, but through the Holy Ghost one and the same in all; and as filled with Him they should have complete unity, the Spirit being the source of a Divine oneness in all their thoughts, mind, purposes, and way of thinking and feeling, as flowing from, and the mind given by, the Holy Ghost; several persons, but one in the Holy Ghost. Paul could say, "We have the mind of Christ" (the "*nous*").

If all had this they were one; yet as receiving, of course, in their case, and in the place of service; but it was the mind for service that, as I said, comes in *v.* 14. In 21, as heretofore observed, those who believed through them are brought in, and it is in communion, not in the power that goes forth: "one in Us." The same Divine power of the Holy Ghost, but leading to this union in fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (compare 1 John i. 3); one in worshipping, and conscious dwelling in God; for fellowship is also common thoughts, joys, feelings, mind, as to all we are occupied with. Only, as is manifest, all the fulness of this is in the Father and in the Son. We are in it to delight and worship and adore.

It is another thing to have the secret of the Lord, and go forth with it in power; yet here with no pretension, for in this unity it is common to all; yet hence evidently Divine, for for fellowship one with another we must be in the light, as God is. The last is evident in the display in glory: "I in them, and Thou in Me" is the form it takes. The glory is the same. Still in it the Son displayed the Father, and He will be displayed in us; but then for that it must be the same glory, His glory, or He is not displayed; and then perfectly in result. They are kept in the name in which Christ knew the Father. They are kept in immediate relationship as children with the Father, and in the holiness of the Divine nature; and so in the power of the Holy Ghost are one, *nothing* diverse entering in.

The xvii. of John is a very remarkable chapter, not only for the rich food saints have long found in it, but for the place it puts the disciples in in connection with that Christ Himself was in (partly noticed in a previous paper in this volume). If we take the true reading to be "whom Thou hast given Me" (*v.* 9), as it seems all do (changed, doubtless, because they could not understand it,) this becomes still more evident.

We have seen the special place of Christ in this Gospel, one with the Father; God; the Word; but more, when the actual, present, concrete fact is brought forward, the Word is made flesh, and dwelt among us, was the Shechinah amongst us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of an only begotten *para patros* ("*with a father*"); *von Sieten des Vaters* (*from the side of a father*). He represented the Father. He who had seen Him had seen the Father. The Father dwelt in Him, as He was always Divinely in the Father. So John i. 18, iii. 13, xiv. 20. But this is the other side of the truth, the Divine side, so to speak. He stood there, however, recipient as Man, now and in glory (though He had had it before the world was). The Son represented Him personally, as He was in Him, and declared Him, as in His bosom, yet Son down here in Manhood. Words, glory, life, all is named; and so the Son is seen in John, though with reference to His eternal Sonship, in which He was one with the Father. "He hath given the Son to have life in Himself"; "the words which Thou gavest Me," and so on.

Now, the first unity in John xvii. is connected with this: "Keep them in Thy name" (that is, "Holy

Father") "which Thou hast given to Me." Now, it is not that Christ was called Father, but that this blessed Man, the Lord from heaven, the Son, bore and presented that name (not Himself; the Father would glorify Him, He the Father), glorified it; He that had seen Him had seen the Father; had manifested this name to the men given to Him out of the world; would have them go directly to the Father, as themselves sons (of course in His name; that was the very power of it); so, "Because ye are sons, God hath put the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

This name, then, the Father had given to Him. All He did was in it, as He came in His Father's name. (The band came from the chief priests, and acted, not for themselves in anything, but wholly in the name of, and their actings were the actings of, the chief priests). "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.' This was direct; the disciples clearly through Him, but as kept directly by the Father, whom they now knew: "Keep in Thine own name which Thou hast given Me," and in which they were thus directly kept in immediate relationship and as conscious sons in communion, as filled with the Holy Ghost. Only the Son now, who once had kept them in the Father's name, now went up as Man ("I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee") into the glory He had with the Father before the world was, so as to be objectively with the Father, with whom He was always one. "I come to Thee"; and they stood in His place, kept by the "Holy Father," in the name given to Christ to make good, and which He had made

good at all cost and perfectly in His Person in the world; and by this they were to be one.

"Thine are Mine, and Mine are Thine," and He now, Christ the Son in Manhood, was now to be glorified in them in the power of the Holy Ghost, who was the Spirit of sonship, hence of association with Christ, [the] Son; but directly with the Father, because they were sons, and represented Him whom the Father would glorify. And as they knew the Father, so the Holy Ghost took the things of Christ, and shewed them to them. And all that the Father had was His, not as Christ, but as Son; more, "All that Thou hast given Me is of Thee"; that is, the Father, not Jehovah, and He accounted as such. Thus they, representing Christ, would be one (in the power of the Holy Ghost), kept in the name given to Christ in this world; that is, to hear, reveal, and glorify by acting for it and its glory in everything. They were to glorify Christ, but then Christ bearing this name, as come in His Father's name; yet all that was the Father's His, and His the Father's; those He had specifically given Him by the Father; for all here is received, and the Father glorified by Him, and He to present them along with Himself (for we have not union here), "the Firstborn among many brethren."

Now, the first disciples were to carry this work on in this world; and as Christ, always in communion with His Father in His work, revealed Him, and carried His name before the world, so they would His Father's, and the Son's, the knowledge of which is life eternal. Being wholly this and in this, by and according to the

power of the Holy Ghost, they were one (only in grace by the Holy Ghost); as we are in their place of service, and as led by the Holy Ghost. That was their place, though receiving all.

Now, the Lord directly connects it all with what He had, before the world was, with the Father, both at the beginning and end of the chapter. This gives a wonderful place to the disciples in the Lord's mind. It was noticed before, in the former part of the paper: their starting-point, *Stellung* (position), not the service itself, and a prayer that it might be their *Zustand* (condition); their place down here, and what was needed to connect it with Christ's place in heaven, with what went before; He being glorified is in what follows, 14-19.

In the first unity, 9-11, I find much more distinct Persons in Christ and the Father (though ever Divinely one); but here, as Mediator, "I pray for those whom Thou hast given Me." Hence "Mine" and "Thine"; though all Mine Thine and Thine Mine. "They are Thine, and I" (not those that had been in Christ) "am glorified in them." "I am no more in the world." "I come to Thee." Thus, though one, the distinction of the Persons (Jesus being as One that had been on earth, and had His place there as Man,) is distinctly brought out; I do not mean merely in Godhead, but in the accomplished order of events. But then with this there was no difference or duality of counsels, work, whose were the Father's, whose (Christ's) all were; one and the same in thought, purpose, mind, and carrying out of work; though each had His place in carrying it out; and so by one Spirit, by the Holy

Ghost come down, was it to be with the Apostles. The unity of the person is merged in the community of work and mind.

In the second unity it is more absolute, what doctors call intercession. "As Thou, Father, art in Me." There was display and manifestation on earth in Christ. "I in Thee." That was simply Divine (compare xiv. 10, both; 20, only the Divine part). Here it is more absolutely Divine in both parts, yet preserving Christ's personal place. Christians are to be one in *them*, Christ being gone on high so as to make it to be by faith and communion, not manifestation here. In this sense it is the highest, less earthly (and in one sense Jewish, and miraculous display on earth,) than the first. "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

The third comes to be manifestation again, only in glory; and only thus the Father in the Son: "I in them, and Thou in Me." This is not so simply Divine, "Us," but it is Divine in glory; for the Father is again seen in the Son, His glory in the face of Jesus Christ, and His in us. The world will then know that the Father sent the Son, even the Lord Jesus. In 24 we get it, not in unity of the Father and Son, but in heaven, and His personal glory, though now still *given* to Him; but as loved *before the world* (that rejected Him) *was*.

Note the very striking connection between the position of the Lord in glory claimed in John xvii. (in Him connected with His Person, necessarily,) and the place given

us in Him in the counsels of God. This is wonderful. In John xvii. we have, "Glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self" (*para seautō*), "with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was", received from the Father now, as He had become Man, and speaks in that condition, the Son of God become Man, that men might become sons of God; the finishing of the work, of course, the actual foundation, as it must be, if we were to have a part in it, and a part of His own too; the purpose: "That they may be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory. . . . . for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

Now see our place in counsel in and through Him, 2 Tim. i. 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel: whereunto I am appointed," etc. And again Titus i. 2: "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested His word by preaching." Besides the general doctrine in Eph. i. 1-6, and elsewhere.

The life was then manifested in Him, and as Son here in Manhood, and then "true in Him and in you." So that, as Christ had the glory, one with the Father before the world was, and has now re-entered into it as Man (not what is essential, for that He never left, was the Son of Man who is in heaven, the Son of God in the bosom of

the Father; His Divine nature in itself, of course, is incommunicable, as Godhead in itself). So the promise of eternal life was given us in Him before the world was, His purpose and grace in Him, and now is revealed that He has taken it as the Father's gift as Man, holy and without blame before Him in love, and the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, before God, and to the Father: My Father, and your Father; My God, and your God.

The Father's name, the one true God, is the basis of John xvii.; Christ as Son, but as Man, and putting us in His place with the Father (while here), and before the world. Then in 22, we get the given, displayed glory (as in Luke ix.), before the world. In 24 the glory within (as in Luke they entered into the cloud); still as given, but as entered into, within the glory He had before the world was; for in verse 5 He is going in, as He is within in 24. It was the Father to the Son, 7; but given, for He was a Man (*emptied Himself*), (Phil. ii. 7.) But 1 John iii. 2 is yet to be considered; compare especially John xvii. 5 and 24, with 2 Timothy i. 9, and Titus i. 2; add 2 Thess. ii. 14.

The general order (not entering into detail) is exceedingly interesting in John xvii. The Lord gives the words given Him (8); (thus, that joy may be fulfilled in them); 14, the Father's word, and they are hated of the world; 22, the glory. All this in this world, or before it, for joy and witness by word and in power and glory. Then what we have *with Him* in the glory, and meanwhile to be with Him where He is, and behold His glory; and

meanwhile the Father's name declared, that the love He was loved with may be in us, and He in us. The foundation for all this is laid in the first verses of the chapter. Of this there are three parts: The Son is glorified (to glorify the Father); Christ is glorified because of His work; thirdly, He manifests the Father's name to the men given to Him. The first gives the place and character He takes on high; the second, the ground on which He can introduce also in righteousness; the third introduces us into the relationship in which He is as Son. When I say "order" I do not mean the regular and orderly division of the chapter, but merely the points noted; for the manifestation of His name to the men given to Him properly precedes and introduces the giving them the words. Remark, too, that the giving the word is giving the expression of the Divine nature and mind, as Christ the Word was; and this looked at as separating from evil, and associating with the good in which He was and is set apart for our sakes as Man. The whole is to give us the same place with Him.

I further remark on John xvii. besides laying the ground for it in His own exaltation, and manifestation of His Father's name to His disciples, the Lord puts His disciples in four distinct ways in His own place: in His position with His Father; as to the world while in it; in glory; and then in the Father's love enjoyed in themselves. Further, note, in directions for the world we have two means of keeping them from the evil: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth"; "For

their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth."

This world is all one great falsehood. The word gives us that which tells the truth as to everything, is the clue of the Divine path thus, so as to avoid it all; we kept from the evil. We are *not* of the world, as Christ was not. Hence Christ also when tempted uses the word, and is perfectly kept from the evil; but this through truth, and supposing the new nature, the Divine (in the old we are of the world), the word being the path of that nature through the world (giving no place to the old man but nullity and death) is in a certain sense only a keeping from.

Then the Lord adds, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." He was this in the world, because He came down from heaven, and was heavenly, and while here as positively declaring God, did so because while here He was (not had been) in the bosom of the Father, and drew from and lived "on account of the Father," had no cause, motive, principle of life but Him. Now, while personally thus on earth separate from sinners, kept from the evil, He was in this state alone; but when, in the full accomplishment of this separation, He was made higher than the heavens, then He could take us, redemption being accomplished, into it with Him, and minister it to us. Thus He sanctified Himself, that we might be sanctified through the truth.

He has taken the full, new, heavenly place of man, what we may call the new man, the second Adam, according to God's counsels, and hence the affections are

filled *positively* with that which tells the truth, and there is a real deliverance, because it is not keeping from, but being filled with Christ, having the affections filled with the new blessings according to the new life and nature, and there is the communication and ministration of grace and strength in Christ. So in viii. : "The truth shall make you free"; "The Son shall make you free"; the attraction of the tempting things go when the mind is filled with Christ; another nature is at work, and the thoughts are filled with its objects. In this state the evil is repulsive.

I remark, in John xvii. 17-19, two distinct characters and means or sources of sanctification, whose difference is full of interest and instruction. Christ is *the* Word and *the* Truth (that is, He expresses God, and tells the truth of *every* thing), as coming from God, and revealing Him. The disciples were not of the world, as He was not. As disciples they had the communication of what Christ revealed of God, all the Father said to Him, and their moral nature too. He prays, as to the form of this, that they may be sanctified through the truth. The Father's word was truth. This makes the sanctifying power the revelation from the Father in the Person of Christ. But in 19 it is not what Christ is as revelation of the Father, but what He is as model, set before the Father in glory in heaven, and that as Man. Then the truth revealed this too, and thus sanctified them; so that the first part was the revelation of God through Christ, the Word and Truth; the second the

true communication of what He is as Man before God, according to His thoughts and counsels in glory. This gives a very remarkable fulness and reality of character to our sanctification. Through grace, we are really set apart to God, in conformity to, formed after, in our nature and walk, these two revelations or aspects of Christ. This is very full and blessed.

In John xvii. 23 the world beholds the saints' glory as given to Christ, He having given it to them, that it may be known they were loved as He, as a Man, as sent. In 24 they behold His as loved before the foundation of the world (this the world does not); therefore they are where He is, "that they may" (which note, for this is a special portion in the glory besides, though connected with communion).

How very strongly the sense that He was going away, that momentous moment, when the world would see Him no more, is impressed on chapters xiii., xiv., xv. John! How they bear the impress of it! The xvi. is rather what takes His place, and their immediate relationship with the Father; xvii. blessedly puts them in His place with the Father and with the world, founding it on His Person, work, and revelation of the Father, and His words to Christ Himself.

To the end of chap. ix. Christ's manifestation as to His Person having been made to, and rejected by, the

Jews ; x., we have the sheep ; then, xi., xii., the vindication of His character as Son of God, King of the Jews, and Head of the Gentiles (in glory), bringing in death ; and then His Priesthood (xiii.), as in glory, in service ; xiv., we have what He was to His disciples as the object of their knowledge in union with the Father, so making them know where He was going ; and then, as Mediator, obtaining the Comforter, making them know, not only that He was in the Father, but their union with Him ; they in Him, and He in them. Then xv. gives the Son's place as to the body, or at least the branches ; at the end of xv. and xvi. the Holy Ghost, the Comforter's place ; and then xvii. gives the place the Father takes as to those thus given to Christ, and how Christ commits them into His hand as the subject of His love and glory, and His Father's care, as His own.

In John xvii. 17-19 there is connection with what precedes, and some thoughts are needed to complete what has been said. Christ had given them the Father's word, and the world hated them. They were not of it, as He was not. He was of God, of the Father, thus negatively not of it. It was really because they partook of a nature and character, of what Christ had been, as Word of the Father come from heaven. He asks, therefore, for the accomplishment of the position : "Sanctify them through Thy truth : Thy word is truth." They were not of the world, as partaking of the nature of this. The Lord desires they may have the realization and development of the other, the heavenly. Next,

they are sent into the world, as He had been sent into the world. It is not now merely for themselves, but as sent to bear witness of what Christ was. The Father had sent Christ, to manifest Him; Christ the disciples, to shew what He was. But then He sets Himself apart in glory for that, that they may bring the true witness of the heavenly Man, as He of the Father. This also was part of the truth.

In John xvii. I have noticed of old the way in which Christ puts His disciples in the same place with Himself. But, besides, there is the mutuality of the interest of the Father and the Son in them, we knowing the Father's relationship and love to the Son, and the Son communicating this, the love which He enjoyed as devoted in love to us, so as to communicate all His joy to us, and yet also because we are the object of the Father's delight. He manifests His Father's name to us, yet He does it as He knows it Himself, so as to bring us into the same relationship with, and knowledge of, the Father's love which He has, proving the devotedness of His own to us. We are the common object of this intercommunion and relationship of the Father and Son, and at the same time of the peculiar and personal love of each. The order is thus: the *Son* is to be glorified, that He may glorify the Father. But this has a two-fold reference to men in connection with whom He has taken up His place, power over all flesh; that is, His public title and prerogative, as glorified, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him.

Here, when it is in connection with us in blessing, the Father's love is at once brought in. He has given us to the Son; the Father's thought of love the source, but all the accomplishment of it committed to the Son: He gives to them eternal life. Then this eternal life must necessarily answer to its source. It is to know the Father only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

The knowledge of the Almighty is acquaintance with protecting power; of Jehovah, faithfulness to promise; of the Father, in the exercise of love, is eternal life. It is to know Himself in His own blessedness in relationship with the Son. Hence is added, "And Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The Father and His love in sending (still the knowledge of Himself), and He also expression and accomplishment of this love in whom is that life. To be in relationship with these is the very essence and reality of eternal life, separated (in the power of the full knowledge of God in grace in this blessed relationship of Father and Son, and of love to us in sending Him,) from all else. So thus one is with the true God, all idols away.

Next Christ has *finished the work*, and glorified His Father on the earth, and is to be glorified, as we have seen, in virtue of having glorified the Father by His work. He has this *other* title to the glory now, though He had that glory with the Father ere the world was.

Next, He manifests the name of the Father to those whom the Father had given Him; so as, in point of fact, to put them in this place of relationship. But He does so as to those who were the Father's, and by Him

given to Him; and they had now kept the Father's word. But this was not all. They had understood that all that the Father had given to the Son was of the Father. They knew its source, and the relationship of the Father and the Son. It was not separate power in Christ; not Jehovah becoming Messiah; it was the Father who had given to the Son.

The reason introduces us into all the unspeakable grace in which the devotedness of the Son in love to us puts, that all the communications which the Father's love had made to the Son, which were the fruit and expression of that necessary love the Son had made known to the disciples, so that they knew what the Father's love and relationship to the Son was, and that the Son (as to His love) would bring them into it. Thus also they knew that He came out from the Father, and that the Father sent Him. This is the status and condition of the disciples, of believers. The Lord then begins as to His praying for them, not for the world. His prayer was founded on their relationship with the Father and Him. He prayed for those whom the Father had given Him; and here the mutuality of interest in this common object comes out in the fullest and most blessed way; Christ prays for them because they are the Father's. This was the motive to His prayer. He presents them to the Father as His, but His love to the Father makes it a motive with Him to pray for them, because they were His. Blessed assurance, too, for us! but letting us into the mutual feelings of the Son and Father's heart, and about us as object. And this community of interest between the Father and the Son had

no limit. All that was the Father's is the Son's; and all that is the Son's is the Father's; and to the knowledge of this and this relationship we are admitted.

The second reason to which the Father's interest in the Son's glory gives its power, the Son is glorified in them. Then He states their relative place thenceforth: Christ no more in the world; the disciples in the world; and He gone to the Father. For their full blessing He prays that His holy Father would keep them in His own name. He addresses Him as His Father, but as it is in His own name as His holy Father He keeps us. It is in this blessed relationship, according to His own holiness, He keeps us. Thus the disciples are one as united in Christ, in the same relationship to the Father.

It is as partaking of one Spirit; for God the Holy Ghost being the power of this union, it is a Divine union in which we are, by a Divine nature and the same Holy Ghost in all; so that that which is the spring of thought in me is the spring of thought in another saint. We have common glory, the same spring of living power, one single Godhead nature in, and active in, all of us, even the Holy Ghost; and therefore, as animated by that, the same in thought, counsel, and object, as the Son and the Father have one Divine nature; the same spring of thought and purpose. They are one in everything, save the distinction of Persons; and hence it is their oneness is precious, for the distinction of Persons puts heart, liberty, will in it, and Divine purpose of love. Christ had not kept them in His own name. He gave the glory to the Father; and now the Father would keep them, as entrusted to Him by the Son, who had redeemed them.

He had kept them; and now He was coming to the Father, and said these things that they might have His own joy fulfilled in themselves. Well He might say "joy." But such is perfect love; it can keep nothing back from the loved object. If it does, it prefers in that something to the loved object; it is not perfect love. Jesus, who did and does love perfectly, would have His own joy (and He knew what joy with the Father was,) fulfilled in themselves. He then goes on to their consequent relationship towards the world.

I have not sufficiently remarked the contrast and transition from the then present association of the disciples with Christ and that into which He was bringing them in John xvii. Other points have been frequently opened out. I now only occupy myself with this. The first verse states the change. The Lord looks up to heaven from earth, and says, "The hour is come"; and He is to glorify the Father; the glorified sent One will as the Son. The verses 2 and 3, I apprehend, are absolute; that is, apply to the universal effect of the Lord's work, be it in earth or heaven; 4 and 5, He directly contrasts the two cases; 4, what He had done on earth; 5, what was now about to take place as to Himself; 6, the condition of the disciples as in association with man down here; 7 and 8 complete this point; 9, His prayer commences, and with the blessed truth of the common and thus redoubled interest of the Father and the Son; 11, they are left in the world while He is leaving it. They are to be immediately

kept by the Father in thus direct knowledge of Him, as heretofore mediately they were sons with a Holy Father. So had Christ been, and they would thus have His joy fulfilled in themselves. Now, 14, He sets them in their place in the presence of the world. It is Christ's, as often remarked. He had the Father's word. See viii. 26-28. He has now given it to them. They are not of the world, as He was not. They are set apart by the Father's truth; that is, by His word, the full revelation given by Him. What He had revealed (that was *the* truth) was their moral being in the world. As Christ had been sent, so they by Him now. This however shews their place as taking His, without defining in what association they did it. This comes in verse 19. He sets Himself apart (from all the world) as the glorified Man of the Father's counsels in love, that they might have the truth in this shape and way. This gives the definite character and power to the truth itself.

This closes the direct prayer. 20, 21 bring in those that believe through their word. 22, 23 is the new thing in its full outward result, but now connected with the glory into which He was entering. There was a partial display of this, no doubt, in Christ in life (see John ii. 11), and in the disciples consequent on His exaltation (see xiv. 12). But this was only partial. It is not here with or before, but descending manifestation or display in, a proof where there was already faith of the extent of the blessing, or in spite of unbelief, irrespective of real faith. This is also consequent on the taking of the new place, a yet more blessed one,

and where we see, even in this intimate chapter, how the display of the Kingdom is distinguished from the heavenly joys of the saints themselves ever with the Lord, loved before there was a world to be displayed in. Jesus would have His disciples there where He was according to this love, connecting His glorifying as Man with the eternal love of the Father to Him. This is thus distinctly applied now in connection with His breach with the world; for when it had not known the Father Christ had, and the disciples that He was sent.

That was the then present closing scene and associations in which He had declared the Father's name to them; but He would now in such sort declare it that the love wherewith He had been loved should be in them, and He in them. They had owned Him as sent, and He had revealed the Father's name, now declaring it. The love He had been loved with on earth was to be in them, and Himself in them. It is heavenly in what is revealed to them as truth, heavenly in glory, heavenly in abode with Him, according to His present place, and the Father's eternal love to Him; and the present declaring of the Father's name brings us into the Father's love as He was on earth.

Chapter XVIII.

How beautiful is the evidence here of relinquished power! Hence John (the Spirit by him) presenting Jesus in His Person, and the scope of His work, passes by Gethsemane, where the veil is taken off (for a moment) the Lord's own suffering in it. He knew all. The name of Jesus of Nazareth, confessed by Him, had such power in it that they all went backward, and fell to the ground. Of course, He could have acted in power, or going away, as He pleased; but He saved only His disciples, not Himself, giving them the occasion of escape, putting Himself before them, rebuking only their resistance, explaining that the cup His Father had given Him to drink He should surely drink. It was a willing surrender, whatever His suffering. Going forth, He said to them, "Whom seek ye?" And how full of dignity!

Nothing can be more beautiful than the evidence of willing surrender, the acting of Christ in Person, or rather the (willing) passion; not the suffering in His soul. This was just in the order of John, who ever thus brings Him forth to view; didactic, not historical; that is, in character.

—17. What a stout thing man is! It was a bad time to own it. He could confess it another time.

It is a remarkable thing that Jesus's Sonship having been fully proved, and His surrender of Himself in it

being noted, no notice of this is taken at all in examination before the Jews, but of His royalty over them fully, as rejected by them and given up to Pilate; because this brought Him out into His resurrection position and state of Sonship, the reality and power of it (see 35, 39, 40; xix. 6, etc.) And then afterwards His Sonship is brought in as asserted, and He gave no witness to this. It was not witness to Him, but He was to be rejected in His full character before the world (see further xix. 12-15), the full point brought out, and then 16.

—24. ′ Another reason for not owning Him. He was a condemned Person practically. He had just been beaten (woe worth the word!) by an attendant.

There is a difference between Paul and Jesus (the Lord) here. It was not all wrong in Paul; but it was not Jesus.

In the other Gospels more of the circumstances of the denial are mentioned as regards others; here its connection with the Lord. The garden should have called him to remembrance; but to save by strength is another, a different, thing from confessing in word when suffering.

Chapter XIX.

—12. The fear of natural conscience.

—15. "Away, crucify Him." Most sad here the scene closed. The Jews gave up, not indeed Jesus, but themselves deserted into the hands of the Gentiles. They had now no king but Cæsar, the prince of the Gentiles' power. As to them the question was between Jesus and Cæsar.

—19. Thus, while what was in Jesus was hidden, the Jews were completely rejected and humbled.

—21. They were humbled already, but we close here.

Thus this Gospel brings out all that relates to His Person in its minutest details. The same self-sufficiency which rejected His mother when He was abstracted in service, now thinks of her when every trouble and sorrow was upon Him, and shame. But it also shews the close of service, and the different character in which our Lord stood now from the time of His service (and this is important), and the simplicity of Jesus's example when not in service. It is a thing to be studied, and that much withal, the measure of the association of human care with the fellowship of Divine favour, as in John.

—30. Still the same point; not the suffering "Eli, Eli," etc., but the surrender. So before Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power," etc. And with the Jews,

though rejected: "If I have spoken evil," etc. Now still the same great truth: He gave up the ghost when He said, "It is finished." Blessed word! and blessed will!

—34. The answer of Divine love to the last insult of man in Jesus, shewing how this Divine grace did overcome and surpass man's extreme iniquity in its uttermost character, just in Jesus's death both met, even in Him. The blood and the water came out as the shaming answer by man's sin, God glorified in it. It is the power of Jesus's death, what came out of it. The piercing of Jesus in the flesh is that which gives the blood and the water, the sanctifying and cleansing power, its cleansing power in its double aspect.

—36. There seems to have been difficulty with some as to where the passage referred to was, and the paschal lamb has been brought forward. But it seems manifestly to refer to Psalm xxxiv. 20. And, what is more interesting, it leads us to the subject of the Psalm. Hence I think we have the reference of Heb. v. 7, rather than in the 22nd Psalm, xxxiv. 4, 6, 7. John (while Matt. seems to bring forward the official prophecies, so to speak, declaratory of the Messiah,) seems here to shew us the Person and sufferings of Christ, and draw from the Old Testament a testimony which (while the other confirmed the authenticity of Christ's mission) affords the most deeply interesting light to the matter of that.

How the Lord prepared a tomb for Him! This was Joseph's own new tomb, but indeed prepared for Him.

Chapter XX.

—4. As to the order of this see a note elsewhere.

"The first shall be last, and the last first." The thing they came to was the empty sepulchre. Such is this world, the empty sepulchre of the risen Jesus; though we have the witness in it of the risen Lord, the sure and composed proofs to faith that He has been in it, and though under the power of death there, is gone out free. I have a strong conviction that John and Peter here note the Gentile and Jewish people thus cognisant *here* of the death and rather resurrection of Christ, owning He is gone, and that it was He, the Lord indeed, the Son of God, that was rejected, and was dead. They had not known the Scriptures, nor taken the testimony of faith, but believed on the presented evidence. They went to their own. It had no other effect on them here. There was evidently considerable confusion of spirit about them yet.

With Mary it was otherwise. She was not so satisfied. She was a sinner to whom the Lord was most dear as a Saviour, a very gracious Saviour, above all a Saviour. She was bent over the tomb because her remembrance of the Lord was there, and she had not found Him elsewhere yet. She looked for Him only there in sorrow without. This was the Church's position. The Lord was taken away, and it knew not where they had laid Him. But as yet it knew not the resurrection. This is taught it,

for she stood as the Jewish Remnant, the received one by grace; not yet the ascension, but the answer is there. Jesus Himself reveals Himself to her risen. Before, we have seen the value of the death. Forthwith, when the body was pierced, when the death was seen, into the heart, and some of it opened, blood and water came thereout. Now the comfort of the resurrection. Angels watched the tomb for her that came. She looks away now from the tomb, the answer of her soul being given to the Angels, but the answer to her not being found there because Jesus was *not* there, and His Person was the place of blessing. But as yet, till He calls His sheep by name, they knew Him not. But "Why weepest, whom seekest thou?" is His word. The Church, the quickened soul, knows Him thus speaking as risen, and owns Him as Master.

Thus is the Church planted in grace in the Remnant. This is its principle, the principle of its mission in the resurrection. Not the restoration or reception then into corporate fellowship with Himself as present, bodily present, as He will be hereafter; for He must ascend first. He was now only manifested to them to establish the ground of their faith, not to give the actual present accomplishment of their Jewish hopes. In result He must go in the accomplishment of His glory to receive the kingdom above, establish righteousness in the heavens, receiving the Kingdom of the Father, make the kingdom properly heavenly, and also in its heavenly glory the Father's kingdom. Therefore He says, "Touch Me not; for," etc.

But it does not separate Him from them otherwise.

He now, on the contrary, for the first time calls them "brethren," because sanctified to be sons by His resurrection, wherein He was as to us "determined Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness"; now therefore especially and the rather shewing the exceeding greatness of the grace, He says, "Go to My brethren"; they are now put in this relationship; I am still identified with them as a Man; I never lose this character: "I ascend to My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." This is the message of grace. This is the position in which the disciples are set. She (Mary) saw the Lord, and He said these things. The Lord still identifies Himself in His position with them. Thus they are owned as disciples. We shall see just now how He meets them collectively so received. Moreover the Lord said, I am going as so associated (see Psa. xxii. 22).

—17. "Touch Me not." May this text present to us the revelation of our Lord's state as the Firstborn among many brethren, "the First Begotten from the dead," "the Firstborn of all creation," as contrasted, on the one hand, with His ministry in the form of a servant, and, on the other, with His personal glory, the glory which He had with the Father before the world was; in a word, presenting Himself in the character into which we enter as partakers by hope, and therefore purify ourselves even as He is pure; that in which His humiliation and His glory meet, and hence their bond?

"Touch Me not." They thought that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel; but all seemed confounded by His death. "Messiah abideth ever,"

but lo! He is alive, and they were disposed to receive Him as now entering in the flesh on earth into the throne of the Kingdom of Israel, as those that held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Nor were they wrong. Nor was it, on the other hand, without the body He arose; for when He would shew to them and to the ages to come this truth also, He says, "Handle Me, and see . . . for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." But we should have been short of all the blessed instruction which He meant to give us concerning Himself if we had merely known His Divine dominion and His resurrection in the body. We have further here, previous in order as well as time to His ascension to the mediatorial throne, His proposal of Himself as risen in human nature, as "the Firstborn among many brethren," "Go, tell My brethren, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; My God, and your God." See Heb. ii., the whole of which Epistle indeed is a development of the great truths of our Lord's Person and offices as God the Son as Man, and the offices of redemption, primogeniture in the Church, and mediation founded on the offering of Himself, flowing from the wondrous incarnation; and in this Gospel He is fully proposed to us in all these characters; and the study of it with this apprehension will unfold its spiritual instruction in a way wonderful to the soul, and which can only fathom it or find rest in it from the apprehension that, while He is every way infinite, He is love, and that knowing Him thus by love is alone knowing God. What a blessed thought! for love peculiarly meets necessity, while it satisfies the highest

delight. It can be approached, though infinite, by infirmity; for who could dare to know God if He did not reveal Himself in love?

But to return to the text. Our Lord presents Himself here, as above mentioned. In saying therefore, "Touch Me not," I conceive He means, You err in addressing Me here as the Object of your allegiance and worship. I have not yet entered on the throne of My Kingdom; but go to My brethren (blessed word!) and tell them I do ascend; I am about to fulfil all their hopes; yea, far indeed beyond their hopes. I ascend; yet I ascend not separating Myself from them in the body of love; for in ascending I own them still as brethren; nay, I ascend in this character to their Father and Mine, to their God and Mine. So that in entering in as King of Glory where, and not here, they are to look for Me, I still am in perfect union with them as My brethren.

I think John's Gospel will be found to contain, not so much as matters of fact as in the declarations of our Lord Himself, a perfect revelation of the mystery of incarnate love, how God was in Christ, and this in all its fulness, everything which in purpose and work, as well as manifestation, filled up all that infinitude which was between a sinful, rebellious, apostate creature and the infinite God in love, having its foundation, not (which were impossible and contradictory, making us God) in our loving Him, but in His first loving us. Wherein we would be gods we enter into enmity against God, and so into that which is essentially contradictory of the Divine nature. O foolish and deceived man! Well might David say, "Like as the hart desireth the

water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"

There is but one other thing to the renewed soul, that for which the Son left the glory of the Father; the work of love in patience here. "Therefore," says the Apostle, "I am in a strait betwixt two." But indeed the exceeding riches of love gives both to His children; that as the Lord set forth the fulness of both, so, as we are partakers of His Spirit, we are made partakers, as Peter says, of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which shall be revealed.

If I might suggest as a matter for more full development and possibly more enlarged accuracy of statement, Matthew's Gospel contains the dispensation of the Kingdom of heaven; Luke's Gospel the moral nature of that Kingdom, and the development of the work of conversion in its members whomsoever. Of Mark's I am not prepared to speak, and I suspect that the Epistles, though all containing the same great truths, will be found to be relatively characterized in such a way; certainly the Epistles of John and the Hebrews are the revelation of the Person and offices of Christ; that is, of the Son of God in the flesh by whom we know and see the Father; while the Romans, Galatians, Colossians and Ephesians unfold the dispensations of God's grace and counsels in their several bearings, from the lowest personal truths to the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, whose judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out. It is not given me to pursue this further at present. There

is another more general view of the same subject which with God's blessing I will take other occasion to enter on: I mean the structure of Scripture and its perfectness.

—19. We have now the manner of the Lord's manifesting Himself to the gathered Church; that is, in the midst of the world, gathered in the midst of it, in hostility to itself, in token of the resurrection, and as of it; gathered on the first day of the week, when man's hindrance might be complete. Then nothing separated from Jesus's love. The doors were shut, but Jesus, "that same Jesus," came and stood. He was personally present in the midst of them, saying, "Peace be unto you." He had never so said before; but now peace was spoken through Him because He was risen. He spoke peace, I say, that very same Jesus, for He shewed them His hands and His side; and joy was their portion now. Once, though not dead, "they were affrighted, supposing," etc. Thus we have just the picture of Jesus present, in spite of every obstacle, in the midst of His brethren, gathered in the power of His resurrection; thus too sanctifying by His presence. We may remark in passing their gathering, as after, "the first day of the week." But the point is the manner of His revelation, the presence of Jesus risen, in the midst of His brethren, giving peace and joy in believing. The Lord's presence is as true now in the midst of His brethren so meeting as in the day of His glory; though not in the same sort; but He is as present. He distinguishes afterwards the difference of those who believed without seeing; to wit, the Church and those who by

[it]; to wit, the Jews and world in the latter day. His first salutation of them, the establishment of their certain knowledge of Him; and, being doubled, the thing certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

As necessary to eye-witnesses, they saw Him personally; but it is true wherever two or three are gathered together in His name. They are sent from "Peace," from Jesus, missionaries from Him with peace. The knowledge of Jesus, and carrying it about them as so gathered, enjoying the Lord's presence (having peace), they are constituted missionaries as so receiving the blessing. It is not the twelve Apostles' nomination. It does not appear they only [were] there; though they doubtless were pre-eminent. And if it were only by virtue of this, as commissioning them, Thomas had no apostolic commission at all. But it is, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed"; shewing the then power to rest in faith: "I believed; and therefore have I spoken."

Care is taken to shew by Thomas it was no simply apostolic commission in its immediate application: xvii. 18 was. Upon His sending upon His commission to the Church He qualifies them, endues them with authority and competent power as such. Saying this, He breathed on them, and says (blessed words! He then had power to give it), "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The ministerial gift of the Spirit is surely the perpetual gift of the Church, and by receiving by virtue of this, sinners to whom peace had been preached receive their forgiveness; and if rejected, cast out, their sins are retained, and bound upon them. This applies

to the least case of discipline; but I speak of the principle; hence acted on, testified of by the Spirit, in holiness (for here Holy Spirit), and so that bound in respect of which this holiness acted. Not here the Spirit of truth, but a Holy Spirit; and thus their act is recognized, is the act of God in result, so done. So given it was a most important office, a most important competency. They received the Holy Spirit as given of Jesus, so binding the Church by His mission, *sending*. Who shall not go according to his measure, the measure of the gift of Christ?

Is this the portion of the Church? It is. It is the Church is here designated. Peace by virtue of His resurrection is the blessing to them. Peace is the basis of their mission, out from Jesus abroad. 22 gives the ground of their reception of others. It is not mission of gift (that from ascension), but mission from His Person with the blessing; mission of the Church from Jesus risen; not ministry, save as the whole Church is sent in principle by the knowledge of the same Jesus who died being risen, and in this sense positive ministry; the Church being ministerial for Christ by virtue of the Holy Spirit dwelling in it, breathed in it in the power of resurrection life, as Adam. The man so breathed into became a living soul. We are made partakers of the life of Jesus, the quickening Spirit. The style runs: "Having quickened us together with Him, having forgiven us all trespasses."

The Paraclete abides with us for ever, given in character of the Spirit of truth and Holy Spirit. And there are those who shall believe when they are

looking on Him whom they have pierced, to whom Jesus will yet shew Himself in due and appointed time in mercy, but with this reproach. And, as 28 will give the full confession of the Jewish Church and brought in Gentiles in that day, so 29 gives the judgment of the Lord on the difference. The saints are those who, having not seen, yet have believed, and they shall be in the glory. This point therefore of believing on Him, the basis of the Church here set out, is the comment on the whole paragraph in 30, 31. 1 Peter i. 8, etc., rests thus on this ground. Resurrection day is marked in 26. They are the two visions of the Jewish Remnant of Christ, the former being that on which the Church is based; *v.* 29 being the warrant and ground of blessing of every subsequent believer or believing Gentile. The general fact of the establishment of His resurrection has its weight from all the circumstances. 21, to the end of 23, is the part which is of such importance as giving the position and state of the Church.

The substance has been given: first, conviction of resurrection, but no communion; the disciples went to their own home. Their calling by grace by name; Jesus's revealing of Himself and individually; then His *presence*, and giving communion, not as when bodily present, saying, "Fear not"; but on the contrary, when met in private for fear of the Jews, His presence as risen giving peace and joy; glad when they saw the Lord; common peace and joy in believing, in communion, thus acting. Then again peace given as the ground of mission, and efficacy to the word by the Spirit breathed, and all their acts sanctioned; that is, as so led by the

Spirit; as the place of forgiveness when no imputation was, but judgment of evil so receiving or rejecting. This the abiding portion of the Church so having the Spirit; forgiveness being the character of the dispensation, and communion. Then the conduct of Thomas, as we have seen, represented the Jewish people.

Resurrection, as to circumstances. First, the Angel rolled away the stone, and sat on it, alarming the keepers. Next, Mary Magdalene comes alone to the sepulchre, and, seeing the stone rolled away, she goes and tells Peter and John (or, at any rate, left alone at once on seeing the stone rolled away), who came to the sepulchre. Mary returned with them, and perhaps other women (or these came afterwards). She stays there when Peter and John go; and then she sees the Lord, and speaks to Him, besides (as the other women did,) seeing the Angels in the sepulchre. She returns to tell the disciples in general (so that we are sure there were two messages). It is this second time on turning she sees, and, on His naming her name (calling His poor sheep by name), she knows Jesus.

I doubt, however, that this was the same as the other women's seeing Him. But it is very probable they came somewhere about this time; but He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She returns to the disciples, and so did they with, first their message from the Angels, and, secondly, both Mary and they with the fact that they had seen the Lord. Hence it is stated in general that the women did so; though John and Mark give more

minute details. But I suppose Mary Magdalene was alone. I should rather doubt she had communications from the Angels. Her words to Jesus on her second visit seem to make it certain; and, moreover, she then saw them.

In Mark, I take it, it is general, as in Matthew the women. Matt. xxviii. 2, 3, 4, happened before the women came, I judge, and the address to the women is given generally as the Angel's message to them. It might prove it was the same Angel, but no more. She was a lonely one, this Mary Magdalene. We can tell, I suppose, why.

The only difficulty in this account seems to me to be Luke xxiv. 22. But it is evident 10, 11, 12, are a mere summary of what happened, to give the general idea. Hence also we have merely women from Galilee, where (note) it is said "certain others." Perhaps these were women not of Galilee. They may have been men. Mary Magdalene is said to have gone alone in John; and it is evident that, if the others went with her, all her conduct was solitary in its connection with Jesus. If the other women went with her at first, they must, on her leaving, have wandered away somewhere, and most of what is in John [have] taken place in their absence. I hardly think Mark's "seen first by Mary Magdalene" can be the "All hail" to the other women; nor this last the "Mary" and "Rabboni."

Note, first Mary looks behind her as she was stooping looking into the sepulchre. On His saying "Mary," she turns right round. It is to be remarked that Mary first says, "*We* know not"; so also it is "*My* Lord";

which, if not shewing that the other women were there, at least shews that, as to the state of her soul, she was associated with them in mind, or associated them with herself. But this could not continue; there was not the same energy of affection. Hence afterwards it is, "*I* know not where they have laid Him." Here she felt her lonely, isolated affection; for full affection is always lonely, save its object.

Chapter XXI.

I cannot help thinking that [xxi.] is the exhibition of the resurrection power of the ministry of Jesus. But I think it has a further meaning. The former manifestations of Jesus were personal; peace, and Church mission, and character. I have spoken sufficiently on that as to this reference to believing on Jesus, and the mission of faith by the Spirit; Church position, its advantage, faith's advantage, over sight. There it is witness; here it is not witness, but gathering power. Now certainly *in a sort* this was true in apostolic ministry, and so had its proportionate realization.

The power of resurrection did bring in a great multitude, but it has surely a further force. When Peter

once before on the Lord's manifestation let down his net at the Lord's word, his net brake. Here it is specifically noticed, for all they were so many his net did not break. Now, it is true that, preached by the Apostles, there was a large ingathering compared with the testimony of the unrisen Jesus; but surely it has, as the former, to the Church position, having received the Holy Ghost, to the work of Jesus in the world, calling them to dine, and therefore primarily applied to the Jews. When they were first called the net brake, and filling the ships they began to sink; but now the real time of the full manifestation of the power of the Lord Jesus's resurrection, being the latter day among them, when, after the interval, from His manifestation in Church reception, they go alone to fish again. That night they toil to no purpose; but in the morning Jesus, unawares to them, is on the shore. Under the direction of the yet unknown Saviour they fill their nets; and now they are no longer broken. They could not however draw it then for the multitude of fishes, and the Lord is discovered to them by the discerning thought of John, well acquainted with Him in the spirit of love. Peter leaves the ship, and joins Him on hearing it from him; and they drag consequently the net to shore, full of great fishes and unbroken. They were in a "small ship" now, and but one (which note). Nor were they *far* from shore. But there was already food, fishes prepared, brought, not by them, there; as to which they had nothing to say; but Jesus was there, and all was ready to their sitting down to eat before Him; that is, prepared. They were charged to bring

of their gains; and then, when dragged to shore, they found what they had gathered, had caught. Till they got to shore out of the ships they did not see the fire and the fishes there, and bread.

—16-18. Manifestation to the Remnant called by name, though sinners; but not now taking His Kingship, for He must ascend first. 19 to the end, His revelation to the Church, *and its character*. Here the revelation of the future ingathering brought to shore; called to dine; Jesus then there gathering; brought to shore, and yet Jesus having fish prepared there with Him already, the fruit of other toil and power. And though I have said "Jews," it is not necessarily that all shewn ashore were Jews, but that it was a Jewish work, after a bidding, though not a known manifestation, of the Lord. Then in work there shall be no net breaking, but the netful drawn to shore. Jesus's words: "Which ye have now taken."

There is something very peculiar in the manner of our Lord's revelations. How John and Peter are ever together in their interest in the Lord, and so in each other! It gives a peculiar interest to the relation of the circumstances in which they were engaged. There is always decency in reverence.

Then this word "cometh" shews Jesus not at the place till they were come there, though the fire, etc., was prepared. Then He is present with them in the same familiar kindness as heretofore at supper. It was the same Jesus. He then personally joins them. All this, it appears to me, is the Lord's dealing with the Jews in the latter day. It is quite clear that these were

the direct simple testimony to the Lord's resurrection; but I cannot help thinking that the allusion to the Jewish Church and latter day manifestation of the Lord are here.

—15. The commission given to Simon is one of much importance. Conferred in grace in retrospect of his fall, it shewed to all the manner of graciousness. But the Lord is paramount in grace, and confers as well as restores, abounding in His own riches, as well as patient to our defects; and whether in Paul or Peter, our utter weakness and evil is shewn as fitting for service; denying or destroying the Lord, man's preparation for preaching Him and feeding the sheep. There is much more here therefore than mere restoration. He restores his heart as towards Him, on the unrejected appeal to His own knowledge of him, that knowledge now more fully owned, which had known him about to deny Him. The same knowledge now constituted him before the Church the feeder of His lambs, etc. It is again, we may remark, personal, not entitling, but calling by name; as when He said, "Thou art Peter"; so now, "Feed." But "*poimaine*" (shepherd) is a different thing from "*boske*" (feed), and it mars it to translate it the same; for "*poimaine*" means all the care of leading, guiding, protecting from wolves, etc., as in Acts xx. 28, 29; the whole care of those taken forth, exposed to danger. Then afterwards, "Feed My sheep."

—17. Strange man! He who went on (left to himself) to deny the Lord thrice without stint, is grieved because he is asked thrice, "Lovest thou Me." Yet what grace in it! He did know all things. Happy for

Peter, He knew and saw only the good, His Father's work now. It is a great thing to say, "Thou knowest that I love Thee."

If it be asked, What means "*toutōn*" (than these)? I say, Everything except Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This was the general care of ministration; not mission, but ministry. Authoritative commission before, it was suffering for and content to glorify God now, in authority of mission and governance. I cannot help thinking here again that the reference to Peter is the founding of the care and ministry of the Church of God in the circumcision, and its apostolate. And I suspect that the triple charge refers to the triple circumstances in which the Church or ministry was set: Jewish Remnant, scattered and abroad, and Jewish Remnant etc., again. There was the promise withal that he would be given to follow (in the strength of Christ's resurrection, what he could not do when Jesus had to suffer,) Jesus, as he had spoken before. It should be the subjection of his will, not voluntary acting.

The whole of Peter here seems to represent the ministry as standing on Jewish ground, and of direct association with the Lord. John, on the other hand, as before now, signifies general or Gentile Church ministration. If the Lord choose it to tarry till He comes, that was nothing; Peter had his own association with the Lord; he was to follow Him.

There seems also to be a progress in the way the Lord questions Peter, though Peter's association is constant: "Lovest thou Me more than these?" "More than these"; the things in which he was occupied during

the absence of the Lord, to which he had turned after he had lost Him on his denial. He had seen Him since, but it is manifest he was receiving a quite fresh, redintegrated commission to him as a person: "Simon, son of Jonas." And when there is any denial or failure to the Lord, though we may even go on again in His company, there must be this redintegration, "conversion." From hence his service springs.

The next question is, "Lovest thou Me?" Then, "Hast thou affection for Me?" hast thou thine heart in Me? as, "Lord, he whom Thou *lovest* is sick."

Peter's assertion moreover is uniform. "Knowest" (*ginōskeis*, *v.* 17), is a stronger word than "knowest" (*oidas*, *vv.* 15, 16), denoting recognition. But, save setting the circumcision at the head in ministry, and the triple character of it, there is more in this than the Lord yet gives me to see. The sheep primarily are the Jewish Remnant; but there are others not of that fold, we find, where the Lord's special love rests. When this is drawn out towards Him thus He turns it: Feed (care for) My sheep.

The double portion of the Church, then; death, and tarrying till Jesus come; one following Him, the other if His will; and it may be a more toilsome service, but His will. Love to Jesus may lead us to death; but Jesus's love so tasted may often set us in ministry where we might be glad to follow Him so. The circumstances of John were left comparatively dark; merely "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" But Peter was to be more specially identified with the Lord in circumstances. The Apostle therefore, or the Lord,

does not explain this; only denies its applicability to the reverse of what Peter's was personally, as though it referred to his personal death. We know that John continued till the whole system of the Church was broken up (see beginning of Revelation); and therefore, as it were, to the Lord's coming. The rest was only prophesied apostasy till He come. Thus he stood as the representative of the system; as Paul of its energy in commencement. We have an instance here of the falseness of drawing conclusions here from Scripture. The point was not denying the conclusion (What has God to do with it?) but "Jesus said not to him."

This is always the answer. It was not a part of the conception of the Church in its strength in Jewish association to be cognizant of its positive endurance in any continued or protracted form. It was merely thrown out, as in the compass of Divine will, to be shewn by that will, not the professed purpose in character in which the Church was set forth, (which note), as in Adam's innocence. Yet the purpose, as so dependent, is darkly thrown out. It is not merely, "What is that to thee?" but, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" It did not affect the duty on which the call to Peter rested, nor affect the position in which he was placed. There might be other and wider scenes of God's purpose, but the command of God, and place of the Apostle, rested on what was thus spoken to him. After state might shew the concern and use which the Lord had for another instrument, person or things.

It is very remarkable the way the Lord discloses, and yet conceals, His will here, and opens out the force and

meaning, I apprehend, of this, and the nature and time of the protraction of the dispensation; specially knowing the use made, in point of fact, of John, active after. For it was not Paul, the inceptive energy of the Church, whom we find ministering the Churches in Asia at their (real) close, but John. That was set aside, and he became the witness of the character of its protraction through and onward, till the meeting-point of the Lord's coming indeed, with the (moral) judgment and prophecy (providential chiefly) meanwhile; and then the great result; that is, the awful system formed. The real secret of what it was to result in, which begins from Rev. xii. properly; and compare this 21, 22. The real result with the Lord, God and the Lamb; and then [the] close of all, which [is] in Rev. xxi. 1, etc.

But if all the things of His glory were written the world indeed would not contain the books. Amen.

As to the order in John: there is in the whole Gospel a regular order and definite presentation of subjects.

i. The Being and Person and excellency of the blessed Lamb is shewn, and His relative place also with God, with the world, the Jews, with John, with the Father, and the position of the disciples with Him as manifested, and so with the Law; the consequent blessing in us; the whole Being and relationship of Christ. He is the Word. The revelation of the Father by the Son is the way we know God. Then comes the actual address of John to the Jews as to what he was. The previous statement was of what John was relative to Christ's position from

what He was in the world; here as Jewishly coming after Him.

—29-34. His testimony to what Christ was; Lamb of God, manifest to Israel; Son of God, proved so, not by resurrection here, but anointing.

—35. First, John's disciples joining Him as the Lamb of God, and finding Him *who is the Messias*.

—43. The next day Jesus gathering disciples for Himself; and, lastly, guileless Israelites, found and known under the fig-tree, owning Him as Son of God and King of Israel, and *henceforth* the glory of the Son of Man; the Angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man present therefore on earth; the third day [chap. ii.] the day of resurrection. This is the association of the Church, a new character; His (Jewish) mother cast aside; the water turned into the wine of the Kingdom. It is not introduced consecutively, (for Nathanael properly includes the earthly part, and consequences of it), but a separate statement to shew the Church, and withal in a certain sense the Jewish marriage of Christ. We belong as it were, to the third day. Verse 12 seems to shew, after the purpose in the Church was manifested or set about, that mother, brethren, Jesus and disciples were all together; which was just His earthly ministry in that place which was exalted (though really in heart His city) and should be brought low. Then comes His royal, clearing righteousness in His Father's house. His resurrection (for His body was really the temple of God,) was the sign of His authority, and thus therefore was the ground of faith. Another point was now opened, the way of entrance into this Kingdom. They must have a

new life and nature, be born again. Many believed on Him through miracles; but it was not to be trusted, it was only what was in man.

But [chap. iii.] there was a Remnant wrought upon, hindered where true, and not merely fleshly owning, but in whom fleshly righteousness was good for nothing (and here the real work of the Spirit begins in its truest, yet necessary, work), and with this Jesus coming from heavenly places, having seen and having communion with that which He now revealed from God, and all things of the Father in His hand according to the glory He had seen, and so the Kingdom in two parts: earthly things, for which Jews (for it also hung on resurrection in "the sure mercies," and was really with God,) must be born again, as the prophets testified, for the real enjoyment under God of the earthly things. Besides, the Son of Man must be lifted up, not received of the Jews now (His miracles only affected what was in man), and so be the door of heavenly things; fit men for them too, even eternal life; enable them to enjoy them according to the love in which, as Son of God, He was given. Then the judgment. It was the rejection of the Son; but, as He was the Light, it was the proof of all previous and other darkness.

All this passed previous to the Lord's entrance on His public ministry. We have then his public testimony to the Lord's service and ministry, His relationship, not merely His Person as brought out in type in the circumstances. John disclaims blessedly whatever was not given from above. Man can only receive what is thus given him: "I am sent before Him; He is the Bride-

groom, and has the bride." It is Jewish. It was John's joy to see Him; but He came from above, and was above all. What He has seen (with the Father, and heard, the words given Him, see xvii.,) He testifies. No *man* receives it. He is sent of God; His words are the words of God, and acknowledging them is acknowledging that God is true; a Divine revelation of God to the soul. Man does not receive it; for what He speaks as a Man is without measure of the Spirit in testimony to Him; is not Scripture, but the manner of the Holy Ghost's presence. He was present, and whose power He was given. He *was* the Son with the Father; had all things, as such, at His hand. Life was through faith in Him, eternal life, that is, in the *Son*. When the Son was not believed, the wrath (not of the Father, but) of God rested on him.

Here [chap. iv.] the ministry of the Lord properly begins, connected with life; the previous part, the most important, being prefatory; and therefore the ministry of John is introduced here thus fully again; and consequently it goes forth into the world to sinners, a worthless woman of Samaria learning not at this mountain nor Jerusalem men shall worship *the Father*, God being dissatisfied with all that is; much not in truth, none in Spirit, yet acknowledging His own. He is the Saviour of the world. In this, then, the Spirit, as a living Spirit of communion and sonship under the gospel principle of grace, and a Saviour to sinners, is set out the great fundamental principle, yet not forgetting the outcasts of Jacob even; and this, while thus exhibited, proving the non-reception of it by the human,

the natural heart, the detection of that heart in all its ways by it, and giving life by a word, at distance, through faith. But I suspect there is more in this last of the nobleman.

Then [chap. v.] we have the Son of God brought forward in life-giving, and also judicial, power, as contrasted with the impotency of means sent, as the Law, because of the very nature of the disease; the ample evidence given, however, to the Son, so as to leave man without excuse; then [chap. vi.] to the place of Jesus as Son of Man, owned a Prophet, would be made a King, but taking the place of Priest, while His disciples toiled through the sea, and meanwhile (the sign of God being that He came,) therefore faith in His power everything, and effectual love then proved; this by the word, "the words of eternal life"; withal God there, with Himself; not merely as incarnate, but as slain, and so ascending up to be a Priest till He rejoined them, and they were immediately where they were seeking to be (strictly this is Jewish also).

vii. His glory, still as Son of Man; or, rather, postponement of glory, as connected with the Feast of Tabernacles and giving of the Spirit as ascended, the witness of the glory meanwhile; this specially including Gentiles: "If any man thirst." "Every man to his own," etc., Jesus to the mount of Olives, the place whence He was to go and where return, and where He prophesied in Matt. xxiv. Then Jerusalem; Jews put on test, as a body, by His word (viii.); the light of life (condemning all alike, the current of corruption,) contrasted with the Law ruining sinners in their hands.

This was "I AM" before Abraham. They were of their father the devil.

ix. The power of sight by the work of Christ, removing as contrasted with natural darkness, and so His work of power as exhibited in others rejected, they saying they saw, their sin remaining. [Chap. x.]. What He was *for the sheep*, the Shepherd, traced from coming obediently by the door to unity with the Father; finally the question and grounds of faith stated therein. Then [xi.] the display of that wherein He was rejected; or which He would have there been, had He been received. First, Son of God, by resurrection in power over evil; but here by restoring the dead to this world, for to this He belonged as yet (on this ground verses 25, 26 would be true, though it will be true on a higher as to resurrection to a heavenly calling; Jesus's presence in either case, for it is the Son who is the resurrection); resolution of death, and that even of Lazarus, the consequence. Then [xii.] as King of Israel; then of the Gentiles; but for this death was needed; by which, however, judgment of this world and the prince of this world. 35-50, the comment on this, arising from the statement of the lifting up of the Son of Man, the Christ that was to abide for ever.

xiii. The glory of this looked at; that is, what place He took on His going to the Father, His new station, which was what death really led to; girt, not with a golden girdle, but the towel with which He wiped their feet; continuous love, teaching entire humiliation to serve the disciples, on being exalted on the world's rejection; no cooling of the love. 3, 4, washes their feet,

does priestly service; then the Spirit by word, etc., for a pattern to them. The power of Satan in the evil of the flesh; the perfectness of Christ's work (31, 32) looked at in its real light; thus love shewn, and so who are disciples. Disciple does not mean merely obedience, but one taught of Jesus, and who is learning, or has learnt, and practises Jesus's ways; the utter incompetency of the flesh to act on these principles. On this His departure, where the flesh could not follow Him; what was their comfort; position and dealing of the Comforter come, and Jesus's presenting them then (with the Church contrasted with the world) to the Father, and the Father to them, as He *had* and *would*.

xiv., individually or in relationship as persons; xv., more corporately or as incorporated; xvi., the Comforter's service to the world, and in the Church; xvii., committal to the Father, and place with the Father; that is, Holy Father, for the disciples, ("righteous" as between Him and the world), to bring out in them the witness in glory of who He was; xiii. and xvii., might seem both priesthood; but xiii. is priesthood as regards the evil gathered in their walk, and therefore exercised in connection with the water and girded towel; and in xvii. we have their presenting in the unity and association with Himself in their new nature, and by the Holy Ghost, to the Father: one regarded service here; the other, position and acceptance there.

iv., then, the Spirit giving living communion proper to the Gospel. The three previous chapters were before the close of John's ministry, or the commencement of the Lord's public; v., Sonship, Son of God; vi., Son of

Man in all His characters; vii., the Spirit, till the glory of Him as sent manifested to the world; thus complete; viii., life contrasted with the Law; ix., light contrasted with natural darkness; or worse, supposed light; x., care of the sheep; xi., xii., vindication of Sonship, and Israelitish Kingship to Gentile dominion; death necessary; then, on exaltation, priesthood and service still; comfort by the Father, Son, and Spirit, the Church's portion known; the Church; the Spirit, conviction of the world, and in Church, and connected subjects, as flesh; xvii., the Church before the Father. Such is the theology of John.

Then, xviii., xix., His betrayal, accusation, and death; but power and willingness here shewn all through; not condemned as Son of God (for this has been in question in the whole book, and a title of power, and the controversy with the Jews sovereignly carried on, on this head, all through), but their guilt in charging Him as making Himself a King, and Son of God before Pilate, and His condemnation by the world, as He even says here, "I came into the world"; slighted as Son of God, though afraid; and condemned and rejected as King of the Jews, as Cæsar's friend.

Then, in xx., the Church according to the principle of its foundation, position through Christ's ascension (the kingdom not being entered for His personal owning them); enjoyment of His presence in pledge of resurrection; mission; authority by the Spirit; restoration of the Jews, as a remaining Remnant, by sight. Thus it closes.

xxi., the closing dispensations and history of the

Jewish and Gentile Churches in the persons of Peter and John.

To xviii.-xix. His Person and excellency individually. After John's ministry, iv. is an introductory chapter. After xviii.-xix. in connection with the Church; xiv., xv., xvi. and xvii. have an evidently distinct character, because they are the view of Him subsequent to death and exaltation, as viewed in xii. and xiii. Up to x., the place of manifestation had been Jewish; that takes the sheep; xi. and xii., beginning, had been the vindication against the rejecting part.

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xxi. What a character grace takes in the case of the restoration of Peter! At the moment the saints would have, so to speak, the greatest value in Jesus's eyes, if change there could be, when He had just redeemed them, He confides them to him who had just denied Him. How the very extent and perfectness of this grace was the spirit in which Peter had to watch over them! Grace produces thus what it seeks in affection. Being what it is towards the heart, it produces in it the conscious feeling of what it is; that is, it creates the affection by its manifestation. It was this grace of which Peter had to be the instrument. And, further, the Lord promises to Peter that he should do the very thing which he (failing in will and human strength) had failed in doing; so that the very bitterness of having failed is taken away; for he would do, not by his own will, what he had failed in doing, and so glorify God in it. How perfect this grace is!

Note also John xxi. 19. The administration of the Kingdom of Heaven closes and comes to nothing in Peter's hand, as to its special character, as it had in Jesus's; though in both all the counsel of God was accomplished. In John's case, who speaks of dwelling in God, and God in us, the essential principle of the dispensation and of life, and who can therefore hang suspended in God over its fate, in the energy of that unfailing life, when all its forms are gone. The Lord holds him thus in this suspense, unseen, apocryphal, till He come; and this *was* his place, and his heart's answer came quickly, for the Apocalypse looks only into a gloomy future of judgment in the Church (the bride of Christ above); for such is that book. It has no earthly blessing or form, which note. It is entirely heavenly as to the Church. He was the one who had the intimacy of Christ's thoughts as near Him, habitually on His breast; and he follows by affection, not in the command on earth (see also verse 7); he follows from affection and the power of the call addressed to Peter; but the result is, "If I will," etc.

One must understand with John in that intimacy if one would know the meaning of the answer. Nothing is of the recognized position of the Church on earth. That was Paul's part. As a fact, John returns thither when he says, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." In prophecy it is judgment. Below, the Church is in mystery, and the marriage above. Peter ministers the Kingdom of Heaven; Paul, the house of Christ, as on earth holding a certain place. John goes up, and looks down into judgment here, and has the Church for the marriage of the Lamb above. Also in his (John's)

Epistle the Church has no place or standing; it is life in God in the family. His first Epistle is the Father, Christ, and the family; their life. In the Apocalypse it is the throne, the Lamb in it, and servants, seals, and judgments on the earth. The Church, as spouse, takes her place by righteous judgment. The Apostles rejoice in judgment. He comes forth judging, and making war.

I see more than ever a Divine Person in John, and, now especially in viii.; so that it is the Divine Person that, with the Father, gives testimony to who the Christ is. All this gives a very peculiar and very instructive character to John's Gospel: the Word made flesh (i. 14). Before that it was simply the Divine nature in itself, and a new nature in us needed to receive the manifestation of it. Then we come to the Person of the Word made flesh. Our connection with Him is brought in, and His work in its full result in the world, and for us, as present and permanent blessing. We receive of His fulness; He is the Lamb of God; He baptizes with the Holy Ghost. Then His actual connection with the world (indeed, with all things), in the government of God.

Note, the Person of Christ, the Word made flesh, is seen in its fulness, and we are seen now (after His work and departure) in connection with and receiving from it. This is present consciousness. What follows is testimony as to what, when the testimony was given, was not yet accomplished. But His Person runs all through.

I just add, ii. completes i., save *vv.* 23-25, which belong to the next chapter, which should begin with "But" or "Now." Then the work in us is taken up, and the work for us, from i. 11, 12, and 29, 36. But the Person of the Son is returned to, and withal its definitively testing power. Two points are referred to here: He has "seen and heard"; that is, what is Divine and heavenly. As a Man His testimony is God's; for the Spirit is not there in measure.

In the ivth we have the commencement of His public ministry, which is a breach with Judaism. In v. we have the Divine Quickener; Judge as Son of Man. In vi. the Man come down from heaven, and dying, and going up where He was before; again shewing the Divine Person in the Man. In v. the Divine Quickener is the Son of Man, and judges; that is, will hereafter. In vi. the Son of Man, bread, and flesh and blood, for us; ascends up where He (now Son of Man) was before: v. is Divine, and future; vi. human, and present in grace. But if ascended He was not now for the world; and this brings in the Holy Ghost, so that vii. goes with vi.; only the effect postponed, and the Spirit given to *believers* meanwhile.

The development of the giving of the Holy Ghost is from xiv., consequent on His going up on high; xiii. being the water part, *on His going away*, and leaving the world; though the main washing could take place while He was here in a certain aspect (this is in xv.), for they had received the word: xv. is exceptional, what He was then in connection with the Remnant of Israel, still as Son (save the last verses). Otherwise it is very

striking how everywhere He is a Divine Person in and as Man, as we have noted in John xvii. It is remarkable that we have not properly Pentecost in John. Passover is alluded to, vi., but then, Prophet and refusing to be King, He takes the place of Priest. The Holy Ghost is referred to on the eighth day of Tabernacles, when He could not shew Himself to the world; but it is as dwelling in us, and outflowing.

From xiv. we have the Comforter fully taught about, but no connection with Pentecost. In vi. He comes down, and goes up where He was before. But substantially it is Christ on earth, a Divine Person, a Man there, which is taught, that Passover and Tabernacles present. The Holy Ghost comes in, however, fully by the bye as a substitute for Christ, another Comforter. This only points out that the subject of the Gospel as to Christ is on earth. It is personal. The Holy Ghost is His substitute here. Hence, even, I will send Him to you *from the Father*.

It is not the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God. That is official glory, not personal simply: that we have in the other Gospels. He is the Lord there; and this place ever true to faith, yet in testimony confirmed and present power closed with those who were witnesses to His exaltation. And so did the Church, looked at as an immediate whole. The Comforter abides for ever. In John we know it was individual.

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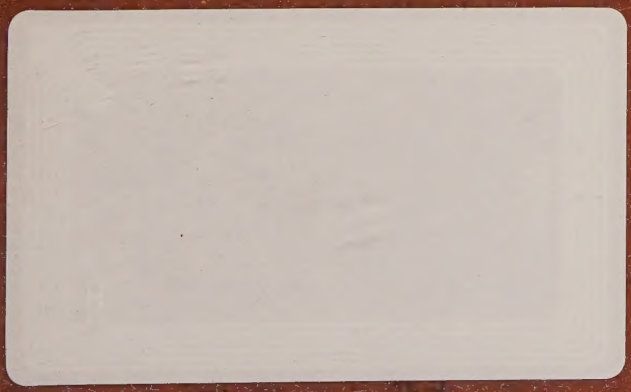

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